

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

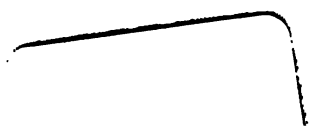
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

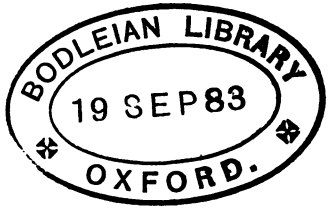
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`





I'VE BEEN A GIPSYING.


600039836Z





A HOUSE-DWELLING GIPSY'S WIGWAM NEAR LOUGHTON.—*To face page* 1.

I'VE BEEN

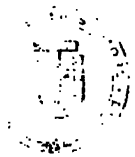
RAMB

OUR GIPSIES AND

IN THEIR

BY

GEORGE SMITH



LONDON

T. UNWIN



I'VE BEEN A GIPSYING

OR

RAMBLES AMONG
OUR GIPSIES AND THEIR CHILDREN
IN THEIR TENTS AND VANS

BY

GEORGE SMITH *of Coalville.*



London
T FISHER UNWIN
1883

24 c

Other Works by GEORGE SMITH of Coalville.

THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN FROM THE BRICKYARDS OF ENGLAND. HAUGHTON & Co., Paternoster Row, London. Cloth gilt, Illustrated, 3s. 6d.

OUR CANAL POPULATION. HAUGHTON & Co. Cloth gilt, Illustrated, 3s. 6d.

GIPSY LIFE. HAUGHTON & Co. Cloth gilt, profusely illustrated, 5s.

CANAL ADVENTURES BY MOONLIGHT. HODDER & STOUGHTON, Paternoster Row, London. Cloth gilt, Illustrated, 3s. 6d.

GEORGE SMITH OF COALVILLE. Sketch of his Life. HAUGHTON & Co. With Portrait, 1s. 6d.

To

THE RIGHT HON. LORD ABERDARE.
THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL STANHOPE.
THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY.
THE RIGHT HON. THE MARQUIS OF TWEEDDALE.
THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF ABERDEEN.
THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF DERBY.
THE RIGHT HON. EARL CAIRNS.
THE RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P.
(First Lord of the Treasury.)
THE RIGHT HON. SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE, M.P.
THE RIGHT HON. SIR WILLIAM V. HARCOURT, M.P.
THE RIGHT HON. W. E. FORSTER, M.P.
THE RIGHT HON. SIR RICHARD A. CROSS, M.P.
THE RIGHT HON. SIR CHARLES W. DILKE, M.P.
THE RIGHT HON. A. J. MUNDELLA, M.P.
THE RIGHT HON. LORD JOHN MANNERS, M.P.
THE RIGHT HON. G. SCLATER-BOOTH, M.P.
SIR H. J. SELWIN-IBBETSON, BART., M.P.
J. T. HIBBERT, ESQ., M.P. T. SALT, ESQ., M.P.
SAMUEL MORLEY, ESQ., M.P.
JOHN WALTER, ESQ., M.P.
WILLIAM RATHBONE, ESQ., M.P.
THOMAS BURT, ESQ., M.P.
A. PELL, ESQ., M.P. J. CORBETT, ESQ., M.P.
HENRY BROADHURST, ESQ., M.P.
AND FRANK A. BEVAN, ESQ.

My Lords and Gentlemen,—I have taken the liberty of dedicating this volume to you as being a few of the right-minded and right-hearted friends of neglected children in our midst; and also to all well-wishers of our highly favoured country, irrespective of sect, class, or party. May its voice be heard!

With the cries of the gipsy children and many prayers, I send it forth on its mission.

Very respectfully yours,
GEORGE SMITH, *of Coalville.*

Welton, Daventry,
December 31, 1882.

The Brickyard, Canal, and Gipsy Children—as well as my humble self—will, as they grow up into a better state of things, ever have cause to feel thankful for the kindly help rendered to the cause by the publications of the various sections of the Christian Church, including the Church of England, the Presbyterians, the Wesleyans, Congregationalists, Baptists, Primitive Methodists, Unitarians, Methodist Free Churches, Methodist New Connexion, Roman Catholics, The Friends, Bible Christians, The Religious Tract Society, Christian Knowledge Society, Sunday School Union, Messrs. Cassell, and other Publishers, the Weekly and Daily Press throughout the country, almost without exception, together with the various editors and other writers whose name is Legion.

CONTENTS.

I.

SUNDAY RAMBLES AMONG THE GIPSIES UPON PUMP HILL.

Gipsy Smith's quarters—Gipsy Brown's wigwam—What I saw at the "Robin Hood"—Tea at Pethers'—Pethers' trials and reception by his mother. . . . . *p.* 1–20

II.

RAMBLES AMONG THE GIPSIES IN EPPING FOREST.

My companion "on the road"—The widow—Telling fortunes—My reception—A youth who had taken to gipsying—A drunken lot—The Forest hotel—A gipsy hunt—Back to my lodgings 20–38

III.

RAMBLES AMONG THE GIPSIES UPON WANSTEAD FLATS.

The Philanthropic Institution, Southwark—Mary Carpenter—Mr. Stevenson—Meeting with "an old fool"—A fire king—A showman's introduction—A school teacher—A gipsy convert's story—A flat's row—My lodgings—Return home . . 39–59

XIII.

RAMBLES AMONG THE SCOTCH GIPSIES.

Wanderings of the brain—My start from Leicester—On the way to Carlisle—Germs of thought grown on the way—Arrival at Kelso—My lodgings—A cold night—Aphorisms—Start to Yetholm—Lovely snow—Arrival at Yetholm—Leydon's poems—Introduction to Blythe—Parting—Meeting an old gipsy—Gipsy queens—Return to my quarters—Baird's work—Child sold to the gipsies—Gipsy frozen to the ground—What England has done—What she ought to do—Poem: Zutilla 304–338

APPENDIX A.

My plans *explained* and *objections* answered . . . 339–351

APPENDIX B.

Letter to the Right Hon. Earl Aberdare 352–355

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

A HOUSE-DWELLING GIPSY'S WIGWAM NEAR LOUGHTON . . . 1

INSIDE A HOUSE-DWELLING GIPSY'S WIGWAM, PUMP HILL, EPPING FOREST 7

"ON THE ROAD" TO OXFORD FAIR 123

A SCISSOR-GRINDING GIPSY, "SCISSORS TO GRIND" . . . 207

GIPSY QUARTERS, PLAISTOW MARSHES 281

GIPSY WINTER QUARTERS, YETHOLM 321

ESTHER FAA BLYTHE—A SCOTCH GIPSY QUEEN 328

A Sunday Ramble among the Gipsies upon Pump Hill and Loughton.

SUNDAY, April 23, 1882, opened with a wet morning. The clouds were thick and heavy. The smoke seemed to hover, struggle and rise again as if life depended on its mounting higher than the patched and broken roofs of London houses. The rain came down drearily, dribbly, and drizzly. It hung upon my garments with saturating tendencies, and I really got wet through before I was aware of it. The roads were very uncomfortable for feet in non-watertight boots. Umbrellas were up. Single "chaps," and others in "couples" were wending their way across Victoria Park. The school bells were chiming out in all directions "Come to school," "It is time," "Do not delay," "Come to school." In response to the bell-calls the little prattlers and toddlers were hurrying along to school. Their big sisters, with "jerks and snatches," frequently called out, "Now, then, come along; we shall be too late; singing will be over, and if it is I'll tell your mother."

At Victoria Park Station the platelayers were at work, and when I inquired the cause, I was told that the Queen's

carriages were to pass over the line to Loughton at eleven o'clock "to try the metals," and to see that the platform was back enough to allow sufficient space for the foot-boards of the royal carriages. In some cases there was not sufficient space, and the line had to be swung a little to enable the carriages to pass.

At Stratford I had a few minutes to wait, and a little conversation with the stationmaster soon satisfied me that he was an observing and common-sense Christian, with a kind heart and good wishes for the poor gipsy children.

I arrived at Loughton in time to join in the morning service conducted by the Wesleyans in a neat iron chapel. The service was good, plain, and homely, and as such I enjoyed it. Of course, being a stranger in "these parts," I was eyed o'er with "wondering curiosity." In the chapel there was a tall old man who sat and stood pensively, with his head bending low, during the services, and whom, without much hesitation, I set down as a gipsy. He did not seem to enjoy the service. On inquiry afterwards, I found that my surmise was correct, and that the tall man was a gipsy Smith, of some seventy winters, who was born under a tent upon Epping Forest, amongst the brambles, furze, and heather, with the clouds for a shelter from the sun's fierce rays in summer, and the slender tent covering, with the dying embers of a stick fire, to keep body and soul together in the midst of the wintry blasts, drifting hail, snow, and sleet, and keen biting frosts to "nip the toes."

After climbing the steep and rugged hill, I made my way to find out a cocoa-nut gambler, who once gave me an invitation to call upon him when I happened to pass that way. With much ado and many inquiries I found the man and his wife just preparing to go with a donkey and a heavy load of nuts to some secluded spot a few miles away, to "pick up a little money" for their "wittles." My visit having ended in moonshine, I now began in earnest to

hunt up the gipsies. A few minutes' wandering among the bushes and by-lanes brought me upon a group of half-starved, dirty, half-naked, lost little gipsy children, who were carrying sticks to their wretched dwellings, which were nothing better than horribly stinking, sickening, muddy wigwams.

On making my way through mud and sink-gutter filth, almost over "boot-tops," I came upon a *dwelling* which, were I to live to the age of Methuselah, I could never forget.

Sitting upon an old three-legged chair, and with a bottom composed of old rags, cord, and broken rushes, was a bulky, dirty, greasy, idle-looking fellow, who might never have been washed in his life. I put a few questions to him about the weather and other trifling matters; but the answers I got from him were such that I could not understand. To "roker" Romany was a thing he could not do. Mumble and grumble were his scholastic attainments.

At the door stood a poor, old, worn-out pony, which they said was as "dodgy and crafty as any human being. It was a capital animal in a cart, but would not run at fairs with children on its back. Immediately you put a child upon its back it stood like a rock, and the devil could not move it."

In the room were five children as ragged as wild goats, as filthy as pigs, and quite as ignorant. On an old "squab bed"—the only bed in the room—sat a big, fat, aged gipsy woman, on a par with the man and children. A young gipsy of about eighteen years stood at the bottom of the squab bed enjoying his Sunday dinner. In one hand he held the dirty plate, and the other had to do duty in place of a knife and fork. Of what the dinner was composed I could not imagine. It seemed to be a kind of mixture between meat, soup, fish, broth, roast and

fry, thickened with bones and flavoured with snails and bread. Upon a very rickety stool sat a girl with a dirty bare bosom suckling a poor emaciated baby, whose father nobody seemed to know — and, if report be true, the less that is said about paternity the better. In this one little hole, with a boarded floor, covered with dirt and mud at least half an inch thick, one bed teeming with vermin, which I saw with my own eyes, and walls covered with greasy grime, there were a man, woman, girl, young man, and five children, huddling together on a Christian Sabbath, in Christian England, within a stone's throw of a Christian Church and the Church of England day and Sunday school. None of them had ever been in a day or Sunday school or place of worship in their lives. They were as truly heathens as the most heathenish in the world, and as black as the blackest beings I have ever seen. The only godly ray manifest in this dark abode was that of gratitude and thankfulness. A pleasing trait is this. It was a vein embedded in their nature that only required the touch of sympathy, brotherhood, and kindness to light up the lives of these poor lost creatures living in darkness. Natural beauty I saw none inside; but the marks of sin were everywhere manifest. Just outside this miserable hive, notwithstanding the stench, the bees were buzzing about seeking in vain for honey, the butterflies were winging fruitlessly about trying to find flowers to settle upon; and across the beautiful forest valley the cuckoo was among the trees piping forth its ever beautiful, lovely, enchanting, and never-tiring "cuck-coo," "cuck-coo," "cuck-coo;" throstles, linnets, blackbirds, and woodpeckers were hopping about from tree to tree within a stone's throw, sending forth heavenly strains, echoing and re-echoing in the distance among the wood foliage on this bright spring Sunday afternoon. I could almost hear with Dr.

James Hamilton, in his "Pearl of Parables" (*Sunday at Home*, 1878), a poor gipsy girl singing with tears in her eyes—

> "Some angel in the land of love
> For love should pity me,
> And draw me in like Noah's dove
> From wastes of misery."

The lark echoes in the air—

> "But I would seek on earth below
> A space for heaven to win,
> To cheer one heart bowed down by woe,
> To save one soul from sin."

I left this hut, after taking a breath of fresh air, for another gipsy *dwelling* round the corner, picking my way among the masses of filth as well as I could. Here a another sight, not quite so sickening, but equally heart-rending, presented itself. A gipsy woman was squatting upon the filthy boards, the father was sitting upon a rickety old chair without any bottom in it; *i.e.*, there were a few cords tied across which served to hold up one or two dirty rags, and these were sunk so low that any one sitting upon the chair could feel nothing but the rims, which were not at all comfortable. Round the man and woman were six children of all ages and sizes, partially dressed in filthy rags and old shoes, which seemed to have been picked out of the ashes upon Hackney Marshes, all of which were much too large for their little feet, and were stuffed with rags. One little girl had a pair of cast-off woman's shoes, possessing little sole and almost less "uppers."

The gipsy father was partially blind through having been in so many gipsy combats. A kick over the eyes had not only nearly blinded him, but as B. said, "I feel at times as if my senses were nearly gone. Thank the Lord, I can see best when the sun shines clear." On my

approaching nearer to where they were sitting the man got up and kindly offered me his *chair*, which I accepted, notwithstanding the disagreeable surroundings. On the walls of their *dwelling* pieces of pictures and old newspapers were pasted. There were parts of *The British Workman, Band of Hope Review, Old Jonathan, The Cottager and Artizan, Churchman's Almanack;* in fact, they seemed to have upon the greasy walls a scrap of some of the pictorial publications published by the Wesleyans, Baptists, Church of England, the Unitarians, Congregationalists, the Religious Tract Society, Cassell, Sunday School Union, Haughton and Co., Partridge and Co., Dr. Barnardo, and others. I said to the poor man, "This is a very tumbledown old place." "Yes," he said, "people say that it has been built nine hundred years; and I believe it has, for the man who owns it now says he cannot remember it being built." I said, "How old do you think the man is who owns it?" He answered, "Well, I should think that he is fifty, for he has great grand-children." Their only table consisted of an old box, upon which, in a wicker basket, there were a young jay and a blackbird which the gipsy woman was trying to rear. As the young birds opened their beaks, almost wide enough to swallow each other, the woman kept thrusting into their mouths large pieces of stinking meat of some kind, about which I did not ask any particulars. These little gipsy attractions and observations being over, I began to inquire about things concerning their present and eternal welfare. I found on inquiry that the only food this family had had to live upon during the last two days had been a threepenny loaf and half an ounce of tea. When I asked them what they did for a living they could scarcely tell me. The man said, "I go out sometimes with a basket and a few oranges in it, and I picks up a bit of a living in this way. Some of the people are pretty good to me. As a rule we begs our



INSIDE A HOUSE-DWELLING GIPSY'S WIGWAM, PUMP HILL, EPPING FOREST.—*To face page 7.*

clothes. Occasionally I catches a rabbit or picks up a hedgehog. If I can scrape together a shilling to buy oranges I generally manages pretty well for that day. Our firing does not cost us anything, and in summer-time the young uns picks up a lot of birds' eggs out of the forest, which are very nice for them if they are not too far hatched." Just at this juncture a practical demonstration took place as to how they dealt with the birds' eggs. One of the boys, I should think of about seven years, came with a nest of blackbirds' eggs—poor little fellow he was no doubt hungry, for he had had no Sunday dinner—which he placed into his mother's hands. The mother was not long before she began to crack them, and into the children's mouths they went, half hatched as they were, just as she fed the young jay. I really thought that one of the youngsters would have been choked by one of the half-hatched young blackbirds. With a little crushing, cramming, and tapping on the back the poor Sunday dinnerless gipsy child escaped the sad consequences I at one time feared would be the result. To see a woman forcing food of this description down a child's throat is a sight I never want to see again. Hunger opens a mouth that turns sickening food into dainty morsels. None of these poor gipsy children had ever lisped a godly prayer or read a word in their lives. The father said he would be glad to send the children to school if they would be received there and they could go free. The whole of these children were born in a tent upon a bit of straw among the low bushes of Epping Forest. Some in the depth of severe winter, others in the midst of drenching rains, and even when the larks were singing overhead, with "roughish nurses and midwives" as attendants.

I found that this "gipsy-man" had been a Sunday-school scholar, but somehow or other—he did not seem desirous of saying how—he got among a gang of gipsies in

early life. He left his praying mother for the life of a vagabond among tramps, with a relish for hedgehogs, snails, and diseased pork. He said he liked hedgehog-pie better than any other food in the world. "Two hedgehogs will make a good pie," he said. He also said that he was once with a tribe of gipsy tramps, and he laid a wager that he "could make them all sick of hedgehogs." They told him he could not. The result was he set off to a place he well knew in the neighbourhood and caught twenty-one hedgehogs. These were all cooked, some in clay and others turned into soup, and all the gipsies who ate them "were made sick, excepting an old woman of the name of Smith."

He next told me how to cook snails, which he liked very much, and wished he had a dish before him then. The snails, he said, "were boiled, and then put in salt and water, after which they were boiled again, and then were ready for eating." Feeling desirous of changing the subject, I reverted to his Sunday-school experience, and asked if he could remember anything he once read (he could not now read a sentence) or sung. All he could remember, he said, was "In my father's house are many mansions," and a bit of a song—

"Here we suffer grief and pain,
Here we meet to part again;
In heaven we part no more.
Oh! that will be joyful."

My heart bled, and I felt that I could have wept tears of sorrow as I sat in the midst of this family of our present-day gipsies. In these two tumble-down wooden dwellings there were two men and three women and twelve children growing up in the densest ignorance, barbarism, and sin.

I gave the mother and children some money wherewith to buy some food, and I left them with gratitude beaming

out of their dirty faces. In going down the hill, a couple of hundred yards from this hotbed of sin, iniquity, and wretchedness, I came upon a party of about one hundred and fifty beautifully dressed and happy Sunday-school children tripping along joyfully with their teachers by their side to an afternoon service in the church close by. I could almost imagine them to be singing as I looked into their cheery faces, and nothing would have given me greater pleasure than to have sung out with them lustily—

"Merrily, merrily, onward we go."

The five minutes' trotting down the hill with this youthful encouraging band brought my forty years' joyous and soul-saving episodes of Sunday-school life vividly before me, which had the soothing effect of temporarily shaking off my late hour's experiences with the gipsies, and causing my heart to dance for joy.

A little later on I took the main road to High Beach and the "Robin Hood." I had not got far upon the way before I was accosted by three semi-drunken, "respectable"-looking roughs, asking all sorts of insulting questions; and because I could not point them to a "California," but rather to a "Bedlam," I really thought that I should have to "look out for squalls." They began in earnest to close round me. By a little manœuvring, and the fortunate appearance of two or three gentlemen, I eluded their clutches.

The road up the hill to the "Robin Hood" was literally crowded with travellers, foolish and gay; cabs and carriages teemed with passengers of the gentle and simple sort, roughs and riffraff, went puffing and panting along. There were the thick and thin, tall and short, weak and strong, all jostling together as on Bank Holidays. I could hardly realize the fact that it was an English Sunday. In one trap, drawn by a poor bony animal scarcely able to crawl, there were fifteen men, women, and children, shouting

and screaming as if it were a fair day—wild, mad, and frantic with swill to their heart's core. The gipsies were in full swing. There were no less than fifty horses and donkeys running, galloping, trotting, and walking, with men, women, and children upon their backs. Half-tipsy girls seemed to have lost all sense of modesty and shame. The long sticks of the gipsies laid heavily upon the bones of the poor animals set the women and girls "a-screeching" and shouting, sounds which did not rise very high before they were turned into God's curses.

I knew many of the gipsies, and, contrary to what I had expected, I did not receive one cross look. The eldest son of a gipsy, named Pether, to whom I shall refer later on, took me into his tea, gingerbeer, and pop tent; and nothing would satisfy him but that I must have some gingerbeer and cake, and while I was eating he handed me his fat baby to look at. It certainly bade fair to become a bigger man than General Tom Thumb. I touched the baby's cheek and put a small coin in its tiny hand. I also spoke a word of genuine praise to the young gipsy mother on account of the good start she was making, and afterwards I shook hands with the gipsy pair and bade them good-bye. To Pether's credit be it said that, although he owns horses, swings, cocoa-nuts, &c., he never employs them on Sundays. His gipsy father had told him more than once that "there is no good got by it. I have noticed it more than once, what's got by cocoa-nuts, swings, and horses on Sunday, the devil fetches before dinner on Monday."

Upon the forest, on God's day of rest, there were no fewer than from five hundred to one thousand gipsy children, not a dozen of whom could read and write a sentence, or had ever been in a place of worship.

In going to my friend's, the house-dwelling gipsy, for tea, in response to his kind invitation, that we might

have a chat together, I called to see a gipsy woman of the name of B—— whom I knew, as I also did her parents, who had recently come to live in the place. When I arrived at the wretched, miserable, dirty abode, I found that her gipsy husband had been sent for, and was now "doing fourteen years"—for what offence I did not attempt to find out—and that his place had been filled by another idle scamp; and, if reports be true, he has also been sent for "to do double duty," and whose place also has been filled up in the social circle with another gipsy. This gipsy woman has entered into a fourth alliance, and, as one of the gipsies recently said, she has really been "churched" this time. I saw much, smelt a deal, but said little; and, after giving the poor child of six a trifle, I made haste to join my friends the gipsies at tea.

When I was invited, my friend Pether said: "You could not mistake the house. Over the door it reads, 'J. Pether, the Ratcatcher and Butcher.' If you ask any one in Loughton for 'Scarecrow,' '*Poshcard*,' 'Shovecard,' or 'Jack Scare,' they will direct you to my house. I am known for miles round." Of course I had no difficulty in finding my friend, with so many names and titles. On arriving at the door my big friend came hobbling along to open it. If my little hand had been a rough, big, cocoa-nut that he had been going to "shie" with vengeance at somebody's head, he could not have given it a firmer grip. Fortunately he did not break any bones in it. I had not been long seated upon the bench before his "poorly" wife came downstairs. The best cups and saucers were set on a coverless table, and the cake, which was a little too rich, was placed thereon. By the side of the fireplace upon the floor was their poor crippled son of about sixteen years, who had lost the use of his arms and legs, but had retained his senses. Tea was handed out to

us, and I did fairly well. I enjoyed the tea, although I felt pained and sorrowful to see a sharp youth confined at home under such sad circumstances. They did their best to make me happy and comfortable. At our table sat one of Mr. Pether's sons, who was in the militia. He had a kindly word for almost everybody in the regiment to which he belonged, especially for the Duke of Connaught, who had a kindly word for him. The Duke asked him one day if he would like to join the Line, to which young Pether said "No." "The Duke is a gentleman, and pleases everybody," said Pether, the young militiaman. "Verily, this is a truth spoken by a gipsy soldier," I said to Pether senior. "Yes, governor," said Mr. Pether; "and the Queen is a good woman, too." To which I replied, "There could not be a better; she is the best Queen that England ever saw." This brought a smile upon their faces over our hot gipsy tea.

Tea was now over, and our chat began. The first thing I said to Mr. Pether was, "How is it that you have become a gipsy with so many names?" This question called forth a laugh and a groan. A laugh, because it brought to his mind so many reminiscences of bygone days; and a groan, because his gouty leg had an extra twinge from some cause or other, which caused him to pull a wry face for a minute. I could not help smiling, when with one breath he laughed out, "Ah, ah, ah, ah!" and in the next he cried out, "Oh, oh! it almost makes me sweat." "Well, to begin at the beginning, sir, my father was a butcher and farmer, and he sent me early to London—I think before I was nine years old—to be with an uncle, who was a butcher. I was with him for a few years, but he was not very kind. He used to put me to the worst and coldest kind of work, winter or summer; and I was often put upon by his man and a young chap he had. The chap used to plague me terribly, and call me all sorts of names; and I was a lad

that was tempery and peppery, and would not be put on by anybody. One day the chap begun to leather me with a cow's tongue, which cuts like a knife, upon the bare skin. He leathered me so much that blood ran down my arms and face. This got my blood up, and while he was bending to pick up something I seized the poleaxe that stood close by and struck him when no one was near with the sharp edge of it upon his head, the same as I would a bullock, and felled him to the ground like an ox. As soon as I saw blood flowing I made sure that I had killed him, and, without waiting to pick up my clothes, I ran off as fast as my legs would carry me, without stopping till I got to Harrow-on-the-Hill. I dirted my clothes and coat and mangled them so that nobody could tell me, and I changed my name to 'Poshcard' for a time. I then began to wander about the lanes, and to beg, and to sleep in the barns and under stacks on the roadside. Sometimes I could pick up a job at butchers', doing what they call 'running guts' for sausages and black pudding. My clothes at times were all alive. When anybody gave me an old coat or shirt, socks or boots, I never took them off till they dropped off. I have slept under ricks in the winter till the straw has been frozen to my feet. Hundreds of times I have slept between the cows for warmth, while they have lain down in the sheds and cow-houses. I used to creep in between them softly and snoozle the night away. The warmth of the cows has kept me alive hundreds of times. I have at times almost lived on carrots. When blackberries were ripe I used to eat many of them; in fact, I used to steal peas and beans, or any mortal thing that I came near. Sometimes I fell in with drovers. I have got in the winter-time under a hedge and nibbled a turnip for my Sunday dinner. I was for some time with a farmer, and used to mind his cattle, and he got to like me so much that he used to place confidence in me. He

would trust me with anything. One time he sent me to sell a calf for him, but instead of returning with the money I ran away and bought a suit of clothes with it. I durst not face him again after that. For fourteen years I was wandering up and down England in this way, daily expecting to be taken up for murder.

"I then joined a gang of gipsies of the name of Lee, and with them I have lied, lived, stole, and slept, more like a dog than a human being. I used to run donkeys all day, and when the old woman came home from fortune-telling she would give me two pieces of bread and butter from somebody's table for my dinner and tea which some of the servant girls had given to her. Among the gipsies I used to be reckoned the very devil. I have fought hundreds of times, and was never beaten in my life. The time when I was more nearly beaten than any other was with my brother-in-law, a gipsy. We fought hard and fast, up and down, for nearly an hour, and then we gave it up as both of us being as good as each other. I have had both my arms broken, legs broken, shoulder-blades broken, and kicked over my head till I have been senseless, in gipsy rows. Oh! sir, I could tell you a lot more, and I will do so sometime."

This terrible recital of facts—of the cruelty, hardships, wrong-doing of present-day gipsy life—almost caused my hair to stand on an end whilst he related the horrors of backwood and daylight gipsyism in our midst.

I asked Mr. Pether if the gipsies were on the increase in the country so far as he knew. He answered—

"I should think they are very much. Gipsies seem to be in the lanes everywhere. I have seen as many as five hundred tents and vans in the forest before now at one time. There are not so many now, as you know; but they have spread all over the country, because the rangers would not allow the gipsies to stay upon the forest all

night. Some of the gipsies have made heaps of money by fortune-telling. Lord bless you! I knew the family of gipsy Smiths, they seemed to have so much money that they did not know what to do with it. They seemed to have gold and diamond rings upon all their fingers. They took their money to America, and I have not heard what has become of them since. Some of the family are left about the forest now as poor as rats. The gipsies are a rum lot, I can assure you. I do not know a dozen gipsies to-day who can read and write, and none of them ever go, or think of going, to church or chapel." "Have you ever been in a place of worship since you ran away from home?" "No," said "Scare," "except when I went with my old woman to be wed; and thank God I can show the 'marriage lines.' Not many of the gipsies can show their 'marriage lines,' I can assure you. I have not been in either church or chapel, except then, for nearly fifty years." I said, "Did you ever pray?" "No," said "Scare," "but I swears thousands of times. Mother prays for me and that has to do. She's a good old creature."

I said, "Now Mr. Pether, from what cause did you receive the name of 'Scare'?" "Well, to tell you the truth," said Mr. "Scare," "at the edge of the forest there was a little low public-house, kept by a man and his wife, which we gipsies used to visit. In course of time the man died, and the old woman used to always be crying her eyes up about the loss of her poor 'Bill;' at least, she seemed to be always crying about him, which I knew was not real—she did not care a rap about the old man—so I thought I would have a lark with the old girl. In the yard there were a lot of fowls, and just before the old girl went to bed—and I knew which bed she slept in—I put up the window and turned one of the fowls into the room and then pulled it gently down again, and I then stood back in the yard. Presently the old girl, I could see by the

light, was making for her bedroom, which was on the ground floor. No sooner had the old girl opened the door than the fowl began 'scare!' 'scare!' 'scare!' 'scare!' and 'flusker' and 'flapper' about the room. The old lady was so frightened that she dropped the candle upon the floor and ran out in the yard calling out 'Murder!' 'murder!' 'murder!' Of course I dared not be seen and sneaked away. Early next morning I went to the house and called for some beer. No sooner had I entered than the old girl told me that she had seen her husband's ghost on the bed, and it had almost frightened her wild. It had made every hair upon her head stand upright. It was her husband's ghost, she was sure it was, she said; and nobody could make her believe it was not; and from that night the old woman would not sleep in the room again. She very soon left the public-house, and one of my friends took it. From this circumstance I have gone in the name of 'Jack Scare.'" "Well, what have you to say about the name 'Scarecrow,' by which you are known?" "Scarecrow," said Mr. Pether, "was given to me after I had fetched, in the dead of the night, a bough of the tree upon which a man had hung himself a few days before. It arose in this way. A man hung himself in a wood through some girl, and after he was cut down and buried a gipsy I knew begged or bought his clothes for a little—I could not say what the amount was, I think five shillings—and wore them. Chaff, jokes, and sneers with that gipsy for wearing the dead man's clothes resulted in a bet being made for five shillings as to whether I dare, or dare not, visit the spot where the man was hung at midnight hour, and bring some token or proof from the place as having been there. I went and fetched a bough of the very same tree, and from that circumstance I have been called 'scarecrow' or 'dare-devil.' '*Poshcard*' or '*Shovecard*' was given to me because I was always a good

hand at cheating with cards." *Posh* among the gipsies and in Romany means "half," and I suppose they really looked upon Pether as having half gipsy blood in his veins.

"Well, how are you getting on now?" "Well, I am getting on pretty well, thank God. I never work my horse on Sundays, and I do not cheat the same as I used to do. Some days I earn £6 or £7, and then again I shall be for days and days and not earn sixpence. I also go a rat-catching and butchering for people, and they pays me pretty well; and sometimes I fetches a hare or two. I am not particular if partridges or pheasants come in my way. If you will let me know the next time you are this way I will have a first-rate hare for you." Of course I thanked him, but told my friend that I was not partial to hares.

"Well now, Mr. Pether, let us come back again to the time when you ran away, after felling the chap with the poleaxe. Did you kill the man?" "No," said Pether, "I have found out since that I did not kill him, but I gave him a terrible scalp. He is dead now, poor chap. I have wished many thousands of times since that I had not struck him, though he did wrong in leathering me with a cow's tongue."

"How did your friends find you out at last?" "Well," said Pether, "after I ran away from home my mother advertised for me all over the country, spending scores of pounds to no purpose. On account of my changing my clothes and name, and travelling with gipsies and tramps, and becoming as one of them, they could never find me out, till I had been away nearly eighteen years. How I was found out arose as follows. One day I was sitting in a beershop with some gipsies, when a man came in who knew me, and he seemed to look, and look and eye me over, head and foot, from top to bottom, as he never had done before. While he was looking at me, it seemed to

strike me at once that I was at last found out for the murder I had always thought that I had committed. He went away for a little time out of the public-house, and as it has been told me since, he went to the telegraph office to send a telegram to my brother-in-law, who was in London, not many miles away, to come down by the next train, for they had found out who they thought to be their 'Jack.' He was not away very long, and I was in twenty minds to have run out of the house; but as he did not come back in a few minutes, I thought I was wrong in judging that I had been found out. Lord bless you, sir, did not I open my eyes when he came in again and brought one or two men with him, and sat down and called for some beer. My legs and knees began to knock together; I was all of a tremble, and I got up to go out of the house, but they called for some beer and would not let me leave the place. For the life of me I could not make it all out. Sometimes I imagined the new-comers were detectives in disguise. They joked and chaffed and seemed quite merry. I can assure you, sir, that I was not merry. I got up several times to try to get out of the house, and to sneak away. He ordered some dinner, and would have no 'nay,' but that I must join them. I tried to eat with them, but I can assure you, sir, it was not much that I could either eat or drink. Presently, after dinner, another man came into the room and sat down and called for some beer. I did not know the man. It has turned out since that the last comer was no other than my brother-in-law. It flashed across me that I was at last found out, and no mistake. I was a doomed man; and this surmise seemed to be doubly true when he took out of his pocket a newspaper and began to read an advertisement giving the description of me at the time I ran away. They now called me by my own name, and asked the landlord to allow me to have a wash, which

he readily granted. When this was over and I was ready, they said, 'Now, Jack, we shall want you to go with us.' Of course there was nothing for it but to go. The worst was come, and I thought I must screw up courage and face it out as well as I could. On our way we called at the telegraph office, where one of the men sent something by telegraph. I did not know what. I have since heard that it was a telegram to my mother, stating that they had found her son 'Jack,' and they were on the way to her house with him. On the way through London to go, as I thought, to the police-station, we turned off the main street to go up a by-street. For the life of me I could not tell where this was, except that they were going to change my clothes, or put 'steel buckles' upon my wrists. We went into a tidy sort of a little house, which I thought was the home of one of the detectives who was with us. I was asked to sit upon the old sofa, and the men sat round the fire. For a little while all was as still as death. Presently I heard someone coming downstairs. The footstep did not sound like that of a man. In a minute there stood before me a woman between fifty and sixty years old. I thought I had seen the face somewhere, but could not tell where. The voice seemed to be a voice that I had heard somewhere, times back.

"The mystery was soon solved, the secret was soon out. As she looked into my face, she cried out, 'Art thou my son John, who ran away from his place nearly twenty years ago, and for whom I have prayed every day since that the Lord would bring you back to me before I died?' And then she came a little nearer, and looked into my face a little closer, and cried out, 'Thou art my son, John; bless the dear good Lord for preserving thee all these years.' I said, 'Are you my mother?' tremblingly. And she took hold of me and put her arms round me, and clasped me closely to her, and she cried and sobbed

out for a minute or two, and then, with tears streaming down her face upon my shoulder, said, while trembling and almost fainting, 'I am thy mother, my son John; let me kiss thee.' And she kissed me, and I kissed her. I cried, and she cried; I thought we were not going to be parted again. We were in each other's arms for a few moments, and the man who brought the newspaper to the public-house to recognize me, made himself known to me as my brother-in-law. Some of my brothers came in the evening—and an evening it was. I shall never forget our meeting while I live." "And you could have sung from your heart, Pether, 'Come let us be merry, for this my son was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found.'" "Yes I could. I always felt, and do so still feel, that when I am gipsying, as you sometimes see me at 'Robin Hood,' my mother's prayers are heard by God. She is a good creature, and is alive and lives with my sister at Battersea. I often go to see her. She is a good creature." Mr. Pether, while narrating his troubles, difficulties, hairbreadth escapes, broke out frequently into sobs and cries almost like a child.

I bade my friends the gipsies good-bye and, after giving the poor crippled boy something to please him, I started to go to the station, but found out that I should have an hour to wait. I therefore turned into a Wesleyan Chapel to enjoy a partial service, at the close of which the choir and the congregation, including a gipsy Smith and his wife, sung with tear-fetching expression and feeling—

"Jerusalem my happy home,
Name ever dear to me;
When shall my labours have an end,
In joy and peace with thee?"

After this impressive service time, steam and "shanks's pony" carried and wafted me back to my friends in Victoria Park, none the worse for my Sunday ramble among the gipsies.

Rambles among the Gipsies in Epping Forest.

AFTER being kept in bed at a friend's house by pain and prostration for forty hours, it was pleasant to tramp upon the green, mossy sward of Nature in Victoria Park on a bright Easter Monday morning, with the sun winking and blinking in my face through the trees on my way to the station in the midst of a throng of busy holiday-seekers, dressed in their best clothes, with all the variety of colour and fashion that can only be seen on a bank-holiday. The fashions worn by the ladies ranged from the reign of Queen Anne to that of the latest fantasy under our good Queen Victoria, with plenty of room for digression and varieties according to the individual taste and vagary. Some of the ladies' pretty faces were not without colour which makes "beautiful for ever." There were others who might almost claim relationship to Shetland ponies, for their hair hung over their foreheads, covering their "witching eyes," making them like two-year old colts, and as if they were ashamed to show the noble foreheads God had given them. Others were walking on stilts, evidently with much discomfort, and with both eyes shut

to the injury they were inflicting upon their delicate frames and constitutions. This class of young ladies evidently thought that high heels, pretty ankles, and small feet, with plenty of giggle and bosh, were the things to "trap 'em and catch 'em." Poor things! they are terribly mistaken on this point. The things to "trap 'em and catch 'em" are graceful action, modest reserve, soft looks, a heart full of sympathy, tenderness, goodness, and kindness. Few young men can withstand these "fire-works." These are the things which make "beautiful for ever."

The fashions adopted by the gentlemen were all "cuts" and "shapes." Naughty children vulgarly call them "young dandies"—"flashy fops" whose brains and money—if they ever had any—vanish into smoke or the fumes of a beer barrel. Their garments were covered with creases, caused by the ironing process at their "uncle's," which certainly did not add to their appearance, or the elegance of their figures. As they yawned, laughed, shouted, and giggled upon the platform, with their mouths open—not quite as wide as Jumbo's when apples are thrown at him—it was not surprising that flies fast disappeared.

There were others whose head and face had the appearance of having been in many a storm of the "bull and pup" fashion. They wore pantaloons tight round the knees and wide about the ankles, and coats made of a small Scotch plaid, blue and black cloth, with pockets inside and outside, capable of holding a few rabbits, hares, and partridges without any inconvenience to the wearer. At the heels of these gentry, who loitered about with sticks in their hands, skulked lurcher dogs.

Frequently I came alongside a young gentleman with an intelligent face, marked by thought, care, and study, who evidently was taking an "outing" for the good of

his health. As he passed the vacant-minded part of the throng and crush, he seemed to give a kind of side glance of pity and contempt, and then passed along, keeping a sharp look-out after his pockets.

Among the crowd of pleasure-seekers there was a large sprinkling of men with premature grey locks and snowy white hair, betoking a life of hurry and worry, thought, care, and anxiety, with several children jumping and frisking round them with glee, delight, joy, and smiles at the prospect of spending a day with their fathers in the forest free from school and city life. As the lovely children were bounding along, it only required a very slight stretch of imagination to read the thoughts of the good father, and to hear him saying to the children, "I wish I was young again, I should like to have a romp with you to-day; my heart beats with joy at seeing you dance about. God bless you, my dear children; God bless you! I am so glad to see you so happy." And then tears would trickle down the face of the early careworn father, at the thought of a coming parting, when he would have to bid them good-bye, and leave them in the hands of God and an early widowed mother, to get along as well as they could in the midst of the cold shoulders of the friends of the bygone prosperous times, who have received many favours at the hands of the early grey-bearded father, but shudder at the thought of being asked by the poor widow for a favour.

The children, with ringlets and flowing hair and bright eyes, now cling to him and hold him by the tails of his coat and his hands, and begin to sing as they speed towards the forest—

> "The Lion of Judah shall break every chain
> And give us the victory again and again;
> Be hushed, my sad spirit, the worst that can come
> But shortens the journey and hastens me home."

And away they went out of sight among the tussocks of grass, little hills, hedges, low bushes, and heather, to gather daisies and other wild flowers, perhaps not to be seen again by me till we meet on the plains of Paradise.

Among the crowd there were a number of men, who could not be mistaken by any one who knows anything of literary work and literary men, trying to get a "breath of fresh air" and a few wrinkles off their face, and to come in contact with some one who could touch the spring of pleasure—which by this time had been nearly dried up, or frozen up by studying and anxiety—and bring a smile to the face.

I ran against one man who was evidently in deep trouble, and I began to question him as to the cause of his sorrow, and he told me as follows: "For many years I was a clerk in a solicitor's office in the city, and on my arrival home at night, I used to write stories and other things for the papers, without pay, merely for pleasure. In course of time my eyesight failed me, and I had to give up my situation. I thought I would try to write a story for publication, so that I might maintain my family, and keep them from the workhouse. I began the tale and finished it. I made sure that I should have no difficulty in getting some publisher to take it up and print it for me, and that I should make a fortune, and be made a man; but to my surprise no one would look at it. I went from one place to another, day after day, without any success, returning home every night thoroughly broken down and dispirited, and to-day I have my manuscript without any prospect of meeting with a customer, and am strolling here to contemplate the next step." I gave him a little encouragement, and told him to cheer up—

"Behind a frowning Providence He hides a smiling face."

We shook hands and parted.

I had not gone far before I overtook a woman in deep mourning, with four children walking slowly along. There was no friskiness, liveliness, and sport about this family. The two least hung as it were upon the skirts of the poor sorrowful mother's garments. Despair seemed to be written not only upon their faces, but upon their clothes and actions. The fountain of tears had been dried up, but not by the kindness of friends, but by poverty and starvation, with all their grim horrors staring them in the face, and with the terrible workhouse as the lot in store for them, till there was scarcely any vitality left in their system from which tears could be extracted either by kindness or sorrow. They seemed to be the embodiment of pallor, languidness, and lifelessness. This poor woman had had a good education; in fact, her manner and conversation seemed to be that of a lady who had moved in good society; but alas, overwork, worry, and death had early robbed her of a good husband, when he was on the threshold of a first-class position and a fortune, and all was gone! gone! and now "blank," "blank," "blank" seemed to be written everywhere. I tried to console her best as I could, and left her.

I had now begun to mount the hills of Epping Forest with a different phase of human life before and on either side of me. On the grass were four gipsies and "Rodneys," with dogs lying beside them. In all appearance they had neither worked nor washed in their lives, and, as they said, they were "too old to learn how now." I had not got much further before I was accosted by a gipsy girl, apparently about fourteen, with a baby nearly nude, and covered with dirt and filth, draining the nourishment of life from its dirty mother, who exposed her breasts without the least shame. She saw that I noticed her, and without a moment's hesitation asked me if I wanted my "fortune told." She said that she would tell

it to me for a trifle. Her father—to all appearance—and brothers stood by, and acting either upon her own instincts or a wink from them, she said, "I see you know it better than I can tell you;" and away she sidled off to attend to her cocoa-nuts, saying, after a round of swearing at four gipsy children, "I hope you will give my baby a penny; that's a good gentleman, do, and God will bless you for it."

I had not gone far up the hill before I found myself in company with a forest ranger; and a rare good-looking fellow he was. He was a short thickset man, and as round almost as a prize bullock. He said the gipsies—so-called gipsies—were the plague of his life. They were squatting about everywhere, breaking the fences and stealing everything they could lay their hands upon. Before the last three years there were hundreds of gipsies in the forest, living by plunder and fortune-telling, and since they had driven them away, they had settled upon the outskirts of the forest and pieces of waste land, some of which were rented by some of the better class gipsies, and relet again to the other gipsies at a small charge per week, who thus escaped the law. This good ranger said there were no real gipsies at the present time in the country. They had been mixed up with other vagabonds that scarcely a trace of the genuine gipsy was left.

Some old gipsies were complaining very much because the price of cocoa-nuts had been raised. "Until now," said this lot of vagabond gipsies, "we could get cocoa-nuts at one pound per hundred; now we are, to-day, giving thirty shillings per hundred; and it is no joke when you get some of those old cricketers at work among them. They bowl them off like one o'clock." "How do you do in such a case?" I asked. "Well, sometimes we let them go on till they get a belly-full, and sometimes we cries quits, and will have no more on 'em, and tell them to go somewhere

else, we are quite satisfied. You know, sir, better than I can tell you that it is no joke to have your nuts bowled off like that. I feel sometimes," said one gipsy, with clenched fist raised almost to my face and closed teeth, "that I should like to bowl their yeds off, and no mistake. I feel savage enough to punch their een out, and I could do it in a jiffy." He now left me and bawled out, "Now, gents, try your luck, try your luck; all bad uns returned." There was a brisk trade, and a lot of shoeless, dirty little gipsy children were scrambling after the balls, and throwing to the winners the nuts they had won; every now and then there would be a terrible row over a nut—whether it was properly hit, or who was the rightful owner. "Bang" went a ball from a big fellow against a cocoa-nut, sending it and the juice inside flying in all directions, and the youngsters scrambling after the pieces. And then there would be another bawl out by a gipsy woman, "Bowl again, gentlemen; try your luck, try your luck; all good uns and no bad uns; bad uns returned." I left this lot of gipsies to pursue my way to the "Robin Hood," where there was a pell-mell gathering of all sorts of human beings numbering thousands. In elbowing my way through the crowd, a sharp, business-kind of a gipsy woman, well dressed and not bad looking, eyed me over, and, thinking that I was "Johnny" from the country, said to a woman who was near her, "You keep back, I mean to tell this gentleman his fortune." Three or four steps forward she took, and then stood full in front of me. "A fine day, sir," said the gipsy woman with a twinkle in her eye and a side laugh, nudging to another gipsy woman at her elbow. "Yes, a very fine day," I said. She now drew a little nearer, and said in not very loud tones, "Would you like to have your fortune told you, my good gentleman? I could tell you something that would please you, I am sure. There is good luck in your face. Now,

my dear good gentleman, do let me tell your fortune. You will become rich and have many friends, but will have many false friends and enemies." Just as she was beginning to spin her yarn one of the B—— gipsies came up. She was dressed in a glaring red Scotch plaid dress, with red, blue, green, and yellow ribbons flying about her head and shoulders; and in her arms was a baby which was dressed in white linen and needlework. This gipsy woman was stout, dark, and with round features, her black hair was waved like I have seen the manes of horses, and her eye the opposite of heavenly. She now turned to the gipsy woman who had accosted me and said, "Mrs. Smith, you need not tell this gentleman his fortune, he knows more than we both can tell him. This is Mr. Smith of Coalville. He had tea with us at K——." "Oh," said the gipsy woman named Smith, "this is Mr. Smith of Coalville, is it? I've heard a deal about him. I'll go, or he'll be putting me in a book. Good-bye." She put out her hands to shake mine, and then vanished out of my sight, and I never saw her again in the forest during the day. I suppose she fancied that I should be bringing her to book for fortune-telling. I was now left with the gipsy B—— and her baby. She threw aside her shawl in order that I might look at the child, who was apparently about four months old. Poor thing! it did not know that it was the child of sin, for its parents were living in adultery, as nearly all the gipsies do. This gipsy woman was earning money for herself, and an idle man she was keeping, by exhibiting her illegitimate offspring and telling silly girls their fortunes. Think about it lightly as we may, fortune-telling is vastly on the increase all over the country, producing most deadly and soul-crushing results. Just as I was touching the poor baby's face and putting sixpence in its hand, a gentleman connected with the Ragged School Union came up with

his two children. I found as we travelled up the hill together that I was talking to Mr. Curtiss, the organizing secretary of the Union, who was in the forest for an "outing," and could, no doubt, with Dr. Grosart say—

> "I wonder not, when 'mong the fresh, glad leaves,
> I hear the early spring-birds sing;
> I wonder not that 'neath the sunny eaves
> The swallow flits with glancing wing."

When we reached the top of the hill, I took a sharp turn to the left, and bid him and his two interesting sons good-bye.

I had not wandered far before I came upon a group of gipsy children, ragged, dirty, and filthy in the extreme. One of them ran after me for some "coppers." I took the opportunity of having a chat with the poor child, whose clothes seemed to be literally alive with vermin. I asked him what his name was, and his answer was, "I don't know, I've got so many names; sometimes they call me Smith, sometimes Brown, and lots of other names." "Have you ever been washed in your life?" "Not that I know on, sir." The feet of the poor lad seemed to have festering holes in them, in which there were vermin getting fat out of the sores, and the colour of his body was that of a tortoise, except patches of a little lighter yellow were to be seen here and there. "Do you ever say your prayers?" "Yes, sir, sometimes." "What do you say when you say your prayers? Who teaches you them?" "My sister," said the boy. "Tell me the first line and I will give you a penny." "I cannot, I've forgotten them; and so has my sister." "Can you read?" "No." "Were you ever in a school?" "No." "Did you ever hear of Jesus?" "I never heard of such a man. He does not live upon this forest." "Where does God live?" "I don't know; I never heard of him neither. There used to be a chap live in the forest named like it,

but he's been gone away a long time. I think he went a 'hoppin' in Kent two or three years ago." At this juncture a Sunday-school teacher connected with College Green Chapel, Stepney, whom I knew, came up, and we entered into conversation together. The poor lad said he had not had anything to eat "since Saturday." My young friend gave him some sandwiches, and I gave him some "coppers," and we separated.

An old gipsy woman appeared upon the scene with two little ragged gipsy children at her heels and a long stick in her hand, reminding me of the "shepherd's crook." On her feet were two odd, old, and worn-out navvy's boots stuffed with rags, pieces of which were trailing after her heels. Her dress—if it could be called dress—was short, and almost hung in shreds; crooked and disgustingly filthy, she strutted about telling fortunes. I said to the old hypocrite, "How old are you? you must be getting a good round age." With a quivering lip, trembling voice, and a tottering limb and stick she replied, "If it please the Lord, I shall be seventy-five soon." "Which tribe of the gipsies do you belong to?" "I belong to the Drapers." She now altered the tone of her voice to that of earnestness and said, "My good gentleman, I hope you have got a penny for me; I've had nothing to eat to-day." Her voice began to quaver again, and, looking up towards the bright blue sky, "Now, my dear good gentleman, please do give me a penny, and the Lord will bless you. I've had a large family—nineteen children, and only three are dead." I said, "What will you charge me for telling me my fortune?" She seemed a different woman in a minute, and replied in sharp tones, "You know it better than I can tell you." The old gipsy woman fancied that she "smelt a rat," and she turned away, with some hellish language to the little gipsies, and was lost among the crowd of holiday-makers passing backwards and forwards,

drinking, swearing, gambling, fighting, racing, frolicsome, funny, and thoughtful. The curtain was now drawn, and I left her to pursue her satanic work among the simple, gay, and serious.

For a few minutes I stood in meditation and wonder, while the crowds of gipsies were pursuing their work in fortune-telling and at the swings, cocoa-nuts, donkey-riding, steam horses, &c. One young fellow I saw among the gipsies was not of gipsy birth or gipsy extraction. It was quite evident from his manner and tattered, black cloth dress, that the young man was nearly at the bottom of a slippery inclined plane. His figure brought to me a familiar scene of some twenty-five years ago, and with which I was well acquainted. The young man reminded me of the only son of a Methodist local preacher who had had the sole management of extensive earthenware works in the ——— for a long term of years, and was highly respected in the district. The young man had been petted and almost idolized. This only son was highly educated, and in every way was being prepared to take his father's place at the works some day. His sisters worked carpet slippers for him, and his mother warmed them before he went to bed; and "good-nights" were given in the midst of loving embraces, prayers, and kisses. Oftentimes they were given and said while tears of thankfulness to God for having given them, as they thought, a son who was to give them comfort, solace, and pride as they toddled down the hill together, while the shades of evening gathered round them. Every one in this Christian household thought no labour in winter or summer, night or day, too much to be bestowed upon their darling son. Alas! alas! this idolized boy, for whom thousands of prayers had been offered to Heaven on his behalf, in an evil hour ceased to pray for himself, and took the wrong turning or "sharp round to the left," and the last I heard

of him was that he had fallen in with a gang of gipsies, ended his days as a vagabond in a union in Yorkshire, and had brought his parents with their early grey hairs in sorrow to the grave. His loving sisters to-day are scattered to the winds. These recollections brought tears to my eyes and a deep, deep sigh from the bottom of my heart.

I hung down my head, for I thought by the smarting of my eyes they would tell a tale, and made my way on foot in the midst of clouds of dust to Chingford, at the edge of the Forest, where Easter Monday was being held in high glee. Among the people, gentle and simple, I met on my way was a cartload of drunken lads and screaming wenches being drawn to the "Robin Hood" and High Beech by a poor, bony, grey, old, worn-out pony, with knees large enough for two horses, owing to its many falls upon the hard stones without the option of choice. If it had not been that it had a load of donkeys and little live beer barrels with their vent pegs drawn, filling the air on this bright spring morning with

> "We won't go home till morning,
> We won't go home till morning,
> Till daylight doth appear,"

it might have turned round and bawled out, "Am not I thine ass?" Unfortunately for the poor dumb animal there was no one in its load that had sense, except in response to a policeman's cudgel, to understand the meaning of "Am not I thine ass?" And away it hobbled and limped till it was out of sight. By this time perhaps the poor thing has been made into sausages, and sold to the "poor" as a rich treat for Sunday only.

One of this load of young sinners stood up in their midst—or I should say was propped up—and, with his hat slouching backward in his neck, shouted, "Mates, let's give three cheers for Epping Forest." "All right," they cried out, "Hip, hip, hurrah! hip, hip, hurrah!"

1. LOCATION (OLIS only)
SHELFMARK (one work only)
247 c. 1.
2. AUTHOR or CATALOGUE HEADING
SMITH, G
3. SHORT TITLE
I'VE BEEN A GIPSYING
4. VOLUME NUMBER(S) (consecutive numbers only)
5. DATE(S) OF PUBLICATION
1883
12 JUN 1984
HP12251
6. READING ROOM
N
7. READERS NAME (block letters)
THORPE, J
8. READER'S TICKET NUMBER
A196 3030
9. READER'S SIGNATURE
J. Thorpe

eers for Easter
uted a third, as
ıe cart. "Hip,
ip—" but they
y farther. The
nday. By this
and the jolting
; out as I never
: sin one of the
. out, "I—I—I
d cat." "You
didn't say you
lid," said Bill.
– Punch away,"
ɔin Hood,' and
ɔwn, you fool,"
icken."
ere beheld and
nd star-gazing
the left of the
ıem; for some
r arms showed
:s," by exhibit-
hout any signs
ıtic, backwood
wigwams, say
ıracter. Here

there were droves of gipsies of all shades, caste, and colour, shouting, fighting, swearing, lying, and thieving to their heart's content, with hordes of children exhibiting themselves in most disgusting positions in the midst of the boisterous laughter of their beastly parents.

At one of the cocoa-nut stalls stood a big, fat, coarse gipsy woman with black hair, big mouth, and a bare bosom. Hanging at one of her breasts was a poor baby,

as thin as a herring, and with festering sores all over its face and body. To me they seemed to be the outcome of starvation, poverty, neglect, and dirt. The woman said that "teething" was the sole cause of the sores. This poor child ought to have been nourished in bed instead of being on its way to the grave, which may be at the back of some bush in the Forest, as I am told has been the case with numbers of gipsy children before. Hundreds, and I might say thousands, of them have been born among the low bushes, furze, and heather on Epping Forest without a tithe of the care which is bestowed upon cats and puppies. If children have been and are still being ushered into the world in such an unceremonious manner, it may be taken for granted that they have been and still are ushered out of the world "when they are not wanted" in an equally unceremonious manner. Queer things come to my ears sometimes. Gipsy morality, cleanliness, faithfulness, honesty, and industry exist only in moonshine—with some noble exceptions—and in the brain of some backwood romantic gipsy novelists, who have more than once been bewitched by the guile of gipsydom detrimental to their own interests and the welfare of our country. A "witching eye" has blindfolded hundreds to the putrifying mass of gipsyism; and a gipsy's deceitful tongue has thrown thousands of "simple-minded" off their guard, and left them to flounder, struggle, and die in the mud of sin, with a future hope worse than that of a dog.

A tall fellow, almost like two six feet laths nailed together, now came near, and began to abuse the poor woman in a most fearful manner for having been away from the cocoa-nut stall attending to the needs of her child. The swearing was most blood-curdling and horrifying. I left this establishment to witness the cruel treatment the poor donkeys were receiving at the hands of these vagabond gipsies, which is almost beyond descrip-

tion. The thrashing, kicking, and striking with sharp pointed sticks, to make the poor donkeys go faster with their loads of big and little children on their backs, were enough to make one's hair stand on end.

I now turned from this scene of human depravity to the Forest Hotel to recruit my inner man; this, after half an hour waiting, was accomplished in a gipsy fashion, and with much scrambling. While entering a few notes in my book, a gentleman, apparently of position and education, wheeled up on his tricycle opposite to my window. He had not long dismounted, lighted his pipe, and sauntered about for a rest, before a gipsy woman wanted to make friends with him, I suppose to tell his fortune. Fortunately he was proof against her "witching eyes," forced smiles, and "My dear good gentleman," and turned away from her in disgust. She did not understand rebuffs and scowling looks, and went away with her forced smile of gipsydom hanging upon her lips and in her eyes among the crowd to try her "practised" hand upon some one else not quite so wide-awake as this gentleman upon the tricycle.

A lively change was soon manifest. Dancing among a pother of dust was to be seen in earnest opposite the hotel windows, by a most motley crowd. Fat and thin, tall and lean, young and old, pretty and plain, lovely and ugly, danced round and round till they presented themselves, through sweat and dust, fit subjects for a Turkish bath. The old and fat panted, the young laughed, the giddy screamed, and the thin jumped about as nimble as kittens, and on they whirled towards eternity and the shades of long night.

I now retraced my steps along the Royal Road to the "Robin Hood," and while doing so I tried to gather, from various sources, the probable number of gipsies, young and old, in Epping Forest on Easter Monday

Sometimes I counted, at other times I asked the royal verderers, gipsies, show people, and others; and, putting all things together, I may safely say that there were thirty gipsy women who were telling fortunes, four hundred gipsy children, and two hundred men and women, not half a dozen of whom could tell A from B. Most of the children were begging, and some few were at the "cocoa-nuts." Some idea of the gipsy population in and around London may be formed from this estimate, when it is taken into account that holiday festivals were being held on the outskirts of London at the same time, and in all directions. Upon Wanstead Flats, Cherry Island, Barking Road, Canning Town, Hackney Flats, Hackney Marshes, Battersea, Wandsworth, Chelsea, Wardley Street, Notting Hill, and many other places, there must be fully 3000 gipsy children, nearly the whole of whom are illegitimate, growing up as ignorant as heathens, without any prospect of improvement or a lessening of numbers.

I had now arrived again at the High Beech and the "Robin Hood," and found myself jostled, crushed, and crammed by a tremendous crowd of people. Publicans, fops, sharps, and flats, mounted upon all manner of steeds, varying in style and breed from "Bend Or" to the poor broken-kneed pony owned by a gipsy, were coming cantering, galloping, and trotting to the scene. "What is all this about?" I said to "Jack *Poshcard*," my old friend the gipsy, who stood at my elbow. "Don't you know, governor?" said he. "We are going to have a deer turned out directly, and these are the huntsmen, and pretty huntsmen they are, for I could run faster myself." While the preparations were going on my friend Jack said to me, "Governor, if you will come up again some Sunday I will see that you have a fine hare to take back with you." While we were talking a hare showed its white tail among the bushes on the side of the hill, and

I fancied I heard Jack smacking his lips at this treat in store for him.

There was a tremendous move forward taking place. The deer was turned out, and these London *quasi*-huntsmen were after it as fast as their steeds could carry them, dressed in fashions, colours, and shapes, varying from that of a gipsy to a dandy cockney, holloaing and bellowing like a lot of madcaps from Bedlam and Broadmoor, after a creature they could neither catch, kill, cook, nor eat.

While the din and hubbub were echoing away among the lovely hills and valleys of the forest, I wended my way to the station and to Victoria Park in company, part of the way, with some policemen jostling some youths off to the police station for disgraceful assaults upon young girls.

I strolled in Victoria Park, in company with a friend, the Rev. R. Spears, but no discord nor discordant noises were to be seen or heard.

The Sunday-school children had been enjoying themselves to their heart's content. The grass, in many places, was literally covered with sandwich papers; and here and there a group of Sunday-school teachers were resting after their hard day's work to please and amuse the "little folks" in their friskings and gambols in the fresh air. All this brings to my mind most vividly the long term of years when I had had the charge of such interesting gatherings, with their enchanting singing, sweet voices, pleasant faces, and delightful chatter as the little ones danced and bounded to and fro around me with mesmeric influence too powerful to withstand; and at times I have felt an irresistible impulse prompting me to shout out, "God bless the children!"

I had now arrived at the park-keeper's gate on my way home. The fogs were rising, the shades of evening

were gathering around us, silence and solitude were stealing over the scene, and behind me were four young men singing, feelingly, as they followed me out of the park, in the old evening song tune—

> "Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day,
> Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
> Change and decay in all around I see,
> O Thou who changest not, abide with me."

To which I said, Amen and Amen. "So mote it be."

Rambles among the Gipsies upon Wanstead Flats.

EASTER Tuesday was cold, disagreeable, and damp. A London fog was hanging overhead as I turned early out of my lodgings to visit Wanstead Flats gipsy fair. Between the black fog and the rays of the sun a struggle seemed to be taking place as to which influence should rule London for the day, by imparting either darkness, gloom, and melancholy, or light, brightness, and cheerfulness to the millions of dwellers and toilers in London streets, shops, offices, garrets, cellars, mansions, and palaces. The struggle did not continue long. Fog and mist had to vanish into thin air at the bidding of the Spring sun's rays, and black particles of soot had to drop upon the pavement to be swept into the London sewers by scavengers. For my own part I felt heavy all day through fog and sunshine.

I duly arrived at Forest Gate, and began to wander among the gipsies, "taking stock," and indulging in other preliminaries before making a practical "survey" of the whole.

During my peregrinations among the Wanstead Gonjos, Poshpeérdos, Romani-chals, and Romany Ryes, I came

upon a gentleman with whom I had a long interesting conversation about the best means, plans, and modes of dealing with our little street Arabs and other juveniles who have "gone wrong," or are found in paths leading to it. From my friend I gleaned some interesting information relating to the early steps taken to bring them back into paths of honesty, industry, and uprightness. Mary Carpenter, of Bristol, worked hard, long, and successfully in this direction. Although she has passed away, the fruits of her labour are seen at Bristol and at other places in the country to-day, and will continue green till the last trumpet shall sound, and we are called home to live in an atmosphere where there is no sorrow, crying, wretchedness, poverty, misery, or death, and where gipsy and canal children's rags will be transformed into angel robes, and their dirt and filth into angel brightness and seraphic splendour.

About a century ago, an institution was set on foot in the Borough of Southwark called the Philanthropic Society, date 1780, which provided a home for the children of prisoners, who would otherwise have been thrown upon the world to beg or steal as best they could. For a period of more than half a century, the benevolent character of the society secured for it a fair share of voluntary support from the public. For many years it gathered together and educated both boys and girls—some of whom were gipsy children. The former were taught trades, such as tailoring, shoe-making, and rope-making. The girls were taught laundry work and the duties of domestic life. It was found, however, by much experience, sometimes painful, that the presence of both sexes, although kept as separate as possible, was not advantageous, and therefore, early in the present century, boys only were received. These were non-criminals themselves—only the offspring of that class, and destitute.

When separate prisons were found necessary for the more successful reclaiming, as it was hoped, of juvenile offenders, Parkhurst prison in the Isle of Wight was used for that class. The experiment of keeping young criminals together and away from older ones was considered so far satisfactory that, in the year 1846, Sir George Grey, as Home Secretary, resolved—no doubt at the instigation of Mary Carpenter, and as the result of her agitation in this direction—on trying the experiment of relieving the pressure arising from increased numbers by drafting those who had the most reliable characters into an institution from which they might hope to have more liberty, and ultimately, by continued good conduct, be placed out in service, and so obtain their freedom. All the inmates of Parkhurst prison were under sentence of seven or ten years' transportation. The Home Secretary had twenty-five of those young persons selected, and a conditional pardon from the Queen was obtained for each, that they might be placed in circumstances to work their way speedily to freedom. The buildings of the Philanthropic Society in Southwark were selected for the experiment, and those juvenile criminals were introduced to their new liberty, and associated with the non-criminal boys then in the Institution. By that action the society changed its character, and henceforth it became a Reformatory School, still retaining its original name.

The experiment was both bold and wise; and to insure success an entire change of management was required. Up to that time repression and terror were too much exercised by the officials who had the care of the inmates. A much more liberal and enlightened policy was resolved upon, and education and home training were to be the substitutes. A large schoolroom was erected on the premises, which were situated immediately behind the Blind Asylum, and extended from the London Road on the east

to St. George's Road on the west, all enclosed within high walls, having a large chapel on the south-west corner, which served for both the inmates of the institution and the general public. It was of the first importance that in making this experiment properly qualified persons should be placed in command. The Rev. Sydney Turner (the favourite son of Sharon Turner, the historian) was the chaplain. The head master and house superintendent was selected from St. John's College, Battersea, and Mr. George John Stevenson, M.A., was appointed to the responsible position. Both the chaplain and the head master shared alike the deep sense of the responsibility involved in the undertaking, as any amount of failure would have been a disaster to be deplored in many ways. So that it required a strong resolution on the part of those officials to secure success. Mr. Stevenson had to assume the position of father of the family, superintending the food, clothing, recreation, and education of the inmates. A new and experienced matron took charge of the domestic arrangements, and thus, from the very commencement of the new plans, the inmates were made to share in the comforts designed to improve their moral and social condition. All the old *régime* was abandoned. It had broken down completely so far as either elevating the inmates or securing public patronage were concerned. The Government paid for each of their boys a fixed sum, which supplied the finances required for working the institution, and a cheerful prospect opened out from the beginning, which was shared alike by the officers and those under their care. That some of the more daring spirits should seek to trespass on the additional liberty thus afforded them was natural; that some few should give evidence of their innate desire for wrong-doing was not surprising. The first who violated their agreement to obedience soon found that the arrangements made with the police autho-

rities were such as effectually broke down all their schemes for hastening their liberty. Five or six of the young rascals who escaped one Sunday evening just before bed-time were speedily brought back either by the police or by the superintendent of the institution early the next day, even when scattered over the metropolis; this had a very deterring effect on such efforts in future. They did not believe in what a writer in "The Christian Life" says—

> "Obscured life sets down a type of bliss,
> A mind content both crown and kingdom is;"

but rather in what a writer in *The Sunday at Home* for 1878 says—

> "Then while the shadows lingering cloked us,
> Down to the ghostly shore we sped."

Those who exercised more patience and discretion were allowed to spend a day with their relatives and to begin to familiarize themselves with the sweets of liberty; and these, after a few months' experience, were sent out into the world to make a new start in life in such occupations as they had learned during their confinement; or those who preferred a seafaring life were placed in the merchant service. A number of gipsy children, sad to relate, have found their way into our present-day reformatories, industrial schools, and like places.

When at Bristol in 1882, inspecting along with a number of ladies and gentlemen the training ship, the superintendent pointed out to me several little gipsies who had been placed under his charge to become either "men or mice."

The first year's experience was of the most gratifying character. The Home Secretary, the Earl of Carlisle, the Bishop of Oxford, and other distinguished persons, visited the institution; and, desiring to become acquainted with the details of the daily experience, sought an interview

with Mr. Stevenson, on whom depended mainly the results of the experiment. The effect of those personal investigations was shown by the too early dispatch of a much more numerous company of young transports from Parkhurst. The design was to relieve a heavy pressure felt there; but it had the effect of increasing the difficulties in the Reformatory School in Southwark. With the enlarged operations the official staff had to be increased, and the same superintendence worked out the same results on a larger scale after a little undue tension on both mind and body. The young persons reclaimed by that process found ready openings all over London, and these were frequently visited by the superintendent during the hours the inmates were at work. The education, conducted by Mr. Stevenson and an assistant, did not occupy more than two or three hours daily, so that handicraft operations might have, as it required, more time for exercise.

The first reformatory school for young criminals in the metropolis was, at the end of two years' experience, a marked and decided success. The mental strain on the superintendent was great and continuous, the duties allowed of no respite for vacation; but as great and permanent advantages were hoped for by the Home Government, all connected with the institution worked for that result, and they had the satisfaction of seeing it. At the end of two years it was resolved to give the institution a more agricultural character, after the example of one established at Mettray, in France, whose founder visited the Philanthropic, in Southwark, during its new experience. To carry out that plan the erection of the Philanthropic Farm School at Red Hill, Reigate, was undertaken. At that time the trustees of the old endowed school on Lambeth Green required a head master, and, unsolicited on his part, Mr. Stevenson was unanimously elected to that office, visiting only occasionally the new establishment,

which required officers with agricultural experience; and it was gratifying to him to know that the foundations so broadly laid were successful on a larger scale in working the permanent reformation of juvenile criminals out in the open country than they could possibly be in the crowded metropolis.

The success of this plan for dealing with juvenile criminals makes it evident that a wise statesmanlike plan of educating the gipsy children would turn them into respectable and useful members of society, instead of their growing up to make society their prey.

To come back to the gipsies upon the "Flats," I bade my friend good-bye, and began in earnest to carry out the object of my visit.

I had not been long on the ground—*marshy flats*—before I saw a young man scampering off to a tumble-down show with a loaf of bread and two red herrings in his arms. He had no hat upon his head, and his hair was cut short. His face was bloated, presenting a piebald appearance of red, white, and black, with a few blotches into the bargain. His foolish colouring paint, jokes, and antics had dyed his skin, stained his conscience, and blackened his heart. His clothing consisted of part of a filthy ragged shirt and a pair of patched and ragged breeches. They looked as if the owner and the tailor were combined in one being, and that the one who stood before me. The stitches in his breeches could not have presented a stranger appearance if they had been worked and made with a cobbler's awl and a "tackening end." His boots in better days might have done duty in a drawing-room, but were now transformed. With a laugh and a joke I captured my new friend, and notwithstanding that he had his dinner in his arms, we entered into a long chat together.

I soon found out that he was the "old fool" of the

show, with which he was connected, and was known among his fraternity as "Old Bones," although he did not seem to be over twenty years old. His salary for being the "old fool," young fool, a fool to himself, and a fool for everybody, was four shillings a week and his "tommy," or "grub," which, as he said, was "not very delicious" at all times. I asked "Old Bones" why he was nicknamed "Old Bones." He said, "Because some of our chaps saw me riding upon an old bony horse one day, with its bones sticking up enough to cut you through, and the more I wolloped it the more it stuck fast and would not go." When I heard this, one of the ditties I knew in the days of my child slavery in the brickfield came up as green as ever—

"If I had a donkey and it would not go,
Must I wollop it? No, no, no!"

"Our chaps," said Bones, "laughed at me. I had to dismount and let the brute take its chance; and from that day I have been named "Old Bones." "I'm not very old, am I?" he said, and began to kick about on the ground. But I would not let him go, for I wanted to learn something of his antecedents. He had been a gutta percha shoemaker, and could earn his pound or more per week, but preferred to tramp the country as an "old fool," live on red herrings, dress in rags, and sleep on straw under the stage. Before he had quite finished his story, another man, dressed in a suit of dirty, greasy, seedy-looking, threadbare, worn-out West of England black cloth, joined us. "Old Bones," after a good shake of the hand, vanished to his show, red herrings, and "quid of baccy," and I was left alone with my second acquaintance. I was not long in finding out, according to his statement, that he was a "converted Jew," and had been to the "Cape" and lost £5000 in the diamond fields, and had come home

to "pull up" again, instead of which, he had gone from bad to worse, and was now tramping the country with an old showman as a "fire king," and sleeping under the stage among old boxes, rags, and straw. His real name was——, but was passing through the world as W——. Strange to say, I knew his brother-in-law, who is a leading man in one of the large English towns.

When I asked the "fire king" how he liked his new profession, he said, "Not at all; at first it was dreadful to get into the taste of the paraffin and oil. After you have put the blazing fusees into your mouth, they leave a taste that does not mix up very well with your food. Paraffin is a good thing for the rheumatics. I never have them now." I questioned him as to the process the mouth underwent previous to the admission of lighted fusees. "If you keep your mouth wet," he replied, "have plenty of courage, and breathe out freely, the blazing fire will not hurt you." My new friend had much of a suspicious cast upon his features; so much so, indeed, that in one of his tramps from Norwich to Bury St. Edmunds, in one day he was taken up three times as "one who was wanted" by the policeman, for doing work not of an angelic kind.

In a van belonging to the owner of "a show of varieties," there were eight children, besides man, wife, and mother-in-law. The showman could read, and chatter almost like a flock of crows; but none of the children, including several little ones, who assisted him in his performances, could either read or write, except one or two who had a "little smattering." The showman quite gloried in having beaten the Durham School Board authorities, who had summoned him for not sending his children to school, while temporarily residing in the city. He defied them to produce the Act of Parliament compelling him as a traveller to send his children to school. The school

authorities had sued him under their own by-laws, and as they could not produce the Act, he came off with flying colours.

Business was slack with this showman, and he undertook to introduce me to all the "showmen and shows" in the gipsy fair. Of course, I had only time to visit a few of the *best* specimens. The first show, which was to be a pattern of perfection, was "boarded." I must confess I did not much like the idea of mounting the steps, in the face of thousands of sightseers, to pass through "fools," jesters, mountebanks, and painted women dressed in little better than "tights," and amidst the clash of gongs and drums. I kept my back to the crowd, slouched my cap, buttoned up my coat to the throat, hung down my head, and crept in to witness one of the "Sights of London." After I had duly arrived inside, I was introduced to my friends the leading performers, amongst whom were the smallest huntsman in the world and the youngest jockey. While we were fraternizing, a row commenced between two of the leading women connected with the show. Two travelling showmen—brothers—had married two travelling showwomen—sisters—among whom jealousy had sprung up. Tears and oaths were likely to be followed by blows sharp and strong and a scattering of beautiful locks of hair. I seemed to be in a fair way for landing into the midst of a terrible row between the two masculine sisters, whose arms and legs indicated no small amount of muscular strength, while their eyes blazed with mischief. One of the dressed showmen, an acrobat, came to me and said, that I was not to think anything of the *fracas*, the women had had only a little chip out, they would be sobered down in a little time. The women came round me with their tale, but I thought it the wisest plan not to interfere in the matter, and kept "mum," for fear that I might get my bones into trouble. Happily the police-

man appeared upon the scene, and before the curtain dropped, and the performing pony had finished his antics, I had with my showman friend made myself scarce. He said he was very sorry, and apologized for having introduced me to his friends under such circumstances. I could see he was chopfallen at the result, as this was a "going concern" in which all parties engaged were to be held up to me as paragons of perfection in the performing and showing business.

My showman friend, according to his own statements, had been almost everything in the "show" line, ranging from that of a tramp to an "old fool." To my mind he was well qualified for either, or anything else in this line of business, with will strong enough to drag his eight children after him; at any rate, himself and his large family were going fast to ruin.

I now visited wax-work shows, and saw the noble heads of the great and good arranged side by side with those of notorious murderers and scamps, reminding me very much of what is to be the lot of all of us in our last resting-place. I had the opportunity of seeing the greatest horse alive, "dog monkeys," "tight-rope dancers," performing "kanigros," "white bears," "stag hunt," "slave market," "working model of Jumbo," "fat women," acrobat dancers, female jugglers, Indian sack feat, female Blondin, cannon firing, and a lifeboat to the rescue. My friend wanted his tea, and left me now to pursue my way as best I could. For a few minutes I stood and looked at the scene; under the glare of their lamps actors pulled their faces, performed their megrims, danced their dances, chuckled, winked, shouted, and rattled their copper and silver, as the simpletons stepped upon the platform to "step in and take their places before the performance commenced." Of course all the shows in the fair were not to be classed in the black list. In some of them useful information and know-

ledge were to be gained. It was the debasing surroundings that had such a demoralizing effect upon the young folks.

Turning from the shows I began again to visit the vans. In one van owned by a Mr. B. there were a man, woman, and nine children, four of whom were of school age. The woman had been a Sunday-school teacher in her early days, but, alas! in an evil hour, she had listened to the voice of the charmer, and down she began to travel on the path to ruin, and she is still travelling with post haste, unless God in His goodness and mercy hath opened her eyes. She told me that she would have sent four of the children to school last winter while they were staying with their van at Brentwood, but the school authorities would not allow them without an undertaking that the children should be sent for one year. They were on Chigwell Common all last winter, and could have sent their children to school. She said they were often a month in a place, and would be glad to send the children to school if means were adopted whereby the children could go as other children go. None of them except the poor woman could tell a letter. She had been brought up in a Church of England Sunday school, and could repeat the creeds, &c. "Sometimes," she said, "I teach the children to say their prayers; but what use is it among all those bad children and bad folks? It is like mockery to teach children to pray when all about are swearing. I often have a good cry over my Sunday dinner," said the poor woman, "when I hear the church bells ringing. The happy days of my childhood seem to rise up before me, and my Sunday-school hours, and the sweet tunes we used to sing seem to ring in my ears."

"Oh, come, come to school,
Your teachers join in praises
On this the happy pearl of days;
Oh, come, come away.

The Sabbath is a blessed day,
On which we meet to praise and pray,
And march the heavenly way;
Oh, come, come away."

And, with a deep-drawn sigh, she said, "Ah! they will never come again; no, never! I should like to meet all my children in heaven; but with a life like this it cannot, and I suppose will not be." I gave the children some little books and some coppers, and then bade her good-bye with a sad and heavy heart, which I sometimes feel when I witness such sorrowful sights. Among the crowd of sightseers were, gaudily dressed in showy colours, a number of "gipsy girls," anxious to tell simpletons "their fortunes;" and I rather fancy a goodly number listened to their bewitching tales and lies. Dr. Donne, in "Fuller's Worthies," says of gipsies—

"Take me a face as full of frawde and lyes
As gipsies in your common lottereyes,
That is more false and more sophisticate
Than our saints' reliques, or man of state;
Yet such being glosed by the sleight of arte,
Faine admiration, wininge many a hart."

I next came upon a gipsy tent, *i.e.*, a few sticks stuck in the ground and partly covered with rags and old sheeting. The bed in this tent was a scattering of straw upon the damp, cold ground. Here were a man, woman, and four children. The woman and children were in a most pitiable condition. None could tell a letter. One of the children lay crouched upon a little straw—and it was a cold day—in one corner of the tent. Such a pitiable object I have never seen. It was very ill; it could not speak, stand, hear, or eat; and it was terribly emaciated. If ever sin in this world had blighted humanity, before me lay a little human being upon whom sin seemed to have poured forth its direful vengeance without stint or measure. With an aching heart I deeply sympathized

with the gipsy woman and little gipsy children, whose sad condition is worse than the Rev. Mark Guy Pearse's "Rob Rat," which could scarcely be; and I did what I could to cheer them.

I visited a number of tents, and wandered among the poor children and gipsy dogs that were squatting about in the dark upon the cold, wet ground. One fine-faced gipsy Lee and his good gipsy wife have had a family of nineteen children, all of whom were born on the roadside; most of whom are now grown up and have large families. It is fearful to contemplate the number of gipsy wanderers and hedgebottom travellers from this family who are neither doing themselves or the country any good.

There were on the "Flats" at the gipsy fair about one hundred and thirty families in tents and in vans; and of this number there would be forty families squatting about with their lurcher dogs, ready for any kind of game, big or little, black or white, bound by bars or as free as the air. As a rule a gipsy's list of game includes, according to Asiatic notions and ideas, all the eatable live or dead stock in creation that either he or his dog can lay their hands upon or stick their teeth into.

There must have been over four hundred gipsy and other travelling children going without education, and not one could ever have been in a Sunday school.

It was about 10.30. The mouths and hearts of those who were left began to breed venomous, waspish words. At any rate, all the more steady and sensible part of the sightseers were wending their way homewards. Others were making for the beershops and public-houses, and the riff-raff were loitering about for what they could pick up. Policemen seemed to be creeping upon the ground, buttoned up to the throat, and ready for any emergency.

A few yards from where I was standing I noticed, by

the aid of gas, naptha, and paraffin, a gipsyish-looking man standing, opposite one of the cottages, with his arms folded over the palings. I soon found out that he was a gipsy, but had recently taken to house-dwelling, and was now engaged in labourer's work with bricklayers. He invited me into his comfortably furnished house, and introduced me to his tidy wife, who was not a gipsy, and two good-looking little children. I had a few minutes' chat with them. He gave me a short account of the suffering, trials, and hardships which he endured while tramping the country, and living in tents, and under vans, and on the roadside. "In early life," he said, "when I was quite a child, I was placed with my uncle, who is a gipsy horsedealer, to live with him and my aunt, in their van. For a time they behaved well to me, and I slept in the van at nights. From some cause or other, which I have never been able to make out, I was sent to sleep under the van with the dogs, and to lie upon straw with but little covering. My food now was such as I could pick up—turnips, potatoes, or any mortal thing that I could lay my hands upon. In the winter time I have had to gnaw and nibble a cold turnip for my dinner like a sheep. I used to have to run about in all weathers to do the dirty work of my uncle, mind his horses, ponies, and donkeys in the lanes and fields, for which he would not give me either food, clothing, or lodgings, other than what I looked out for myself. My clothing I used to beg, and, when once put upon my back, there they stuck till they dropped off by pieces. I had a hard time of it for many years, I can tell you, and no mistake. My uncle is now a gentleman horsedealer, and keeps his carriage and his servants to wait upon him. He is well known in London. If he meets or sees me in the streets he turns his head another way, and won't look at me, though I helped to make his fortune. Every dog has its day, and

my turn may come. We gave up drink, and I go to the church and chapel when I have the chance, and I am all the better for it, thank God. I may be as well off as my cruel old uncle some day." I shook hands with this gipsy family, and bade them God speed, and turned again into the fair and among the gipsy tents. Some of the gipsy and other travelling children were running about picking up scraps and crumbs that had fallen from the bad man's table. Every piece of paper that had the appearance of having been folded up was eyed over with eager curiosity and wonder by the poor little urchins before they would believe that it was full of emptiness.

The women were putting the little gipsies to bed, and their evening prayers in many cases were oaths. They had never been taught to lisp the evening prayer—

> "Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me,
> Bless Thy little lamb to-night;
> Through the darkness be Thou near me,
> Keep me safe till morning light."

They threw off their outer garments, rolled under some old, dirty, filthy rags at one end of their little tent, crouching together like so many pigs, and snoozed and snored away till morning, except when they were trampled upon or wakened by their drunken gipsy parents. It is horrible to think that not one of this number, between six and seven hundred men, women, and children—so far as I have been able to make out—ever attended a place of worship on Sundays, or offered a prayer to God at eventide. Sin! sin! wretchedness, misery, and degradation from the year's beginning to the year's end! Would to God that a comet from His throne, as they sit under the starlight of heaven, would flash and flash upon their mental vision till they asked themselves the question, "Whither are we bound?" Christian England!

"Up! a great work lies before you,
Duty's standard waveth o'er you.

Stretch a hand to save the sinking
Carried down sin's tide unthinking."

"The pangs of hell," as the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon says in the *Christian Herald*, March 31, 1880, "do not alarm them, and the joys of heaven do not entice them" to do their duty. With tears of blood I would say, Oh that the voice of Parliament and the action of the Government were seen and heard taking steps to educate the poor gipsy children, so that they may be enabled to read and repeat prayers—even if their parents have lost parental regard and affection for their own offspring.

The business of the day was now over, and it was evident that the time had arrived for "paying off old scores." The men and women had begun to collect together in groups. Murmurings and grumblings were heard. The tumult increased, and presently from one group shouts of "Give it him, Jock" were echoing in the air, disturbing the stillness of the night. Thumps, thuds, and shrieks followed each other in rapid succession. I closed in with the bystanders. Blood began to flow from the "millers," who looked murderously savage at each other. Thus they went on "up and down Welsh fashion" for a few minutes, till one gipsy woman cried out, "He's broken Jock's nose, a beast him." The policeman came now quietly along as if his visit would have done on the morrow. One woman shouted out, "Bobby is coming, now it is all over." To me it looked as if "Bobby" did not like the job of quelling gipsy rows; if he had to quell them it would seem that he had rather they let off some of the steam got up by revenge, spite, and beer before he tackled them.

While this gang of gipsies were separating, another row was going on near to a large public-house, to which I

hastened, and arrived in time to see one of them "throw up the sponge." There were no less than half a dozen fights in less than half an hour. It was now half-past eleven, and I began to think that it was quite time that I looked out for my night's lodging, so I entered into council with the policeman. We visited eating-houses, coffee-houses, lodging-houses, public-houses, and shops in Forest Gate without success. The policeman advised me to walk to Stratford. This I could not do, for I began to feel rather queer and giddy; my only prospect was either to pass the night at the station, on the "Flats," or return by the last train. No time was to be lost. I hastily took my ticket, and almost rolled and tumbled down the steps and into the train, which took me to Fenchurch Street Station, in a somewhat bewildered state as to my next move forward. For a minute or two I stood still, lost in wonder. The policeman soon appeared on the scene with his "Please move on" and gruff voice. I told him I wanted to "move on," if he would tell me where to move to. "There are," answered the policeman, "plenty of shops to move into in London, if that is what you mean. It depends what sort of shop you want. If you have got plenty of money, there is the 'Three Nuns.'" And he also pointed out one or two other first-class places in Aldgate. I bade the policeman good night, and went across the street to look at the "Three Nuns," which was being closed for the night. The outside of the place indicated to me that I should have to dip more deeply into my pocket than my financial position would allow, and I turned to look for fresh quarters in Aldgate. It was now past twelve o'clock, and all the places, except one or two, were closed. On the door of an eating-house and coffee-shop I espied a light, and thither I went. Fortunately the servants were about, and the landlady was enjoying her midnight meal. A bed was promised, and after a

long chat with the landlady and some supper, I was shown into my room, the appearance of which I did not like; but it was "Hobson's choice, that or none." There were two locks upon the door, and I had taken the precaution to have plenty of candles and matches with me. It looked as if a broken-down gentleman had been occupying it for some time, who had suddenly decamped, leaving no traces of his whereabouts. There was but little clothing upon the bed, and the springs were broken and "humpy." I turned into it to do the best I could till morning. The smell of the room was that of sin. The rattling about the stairs during the whole of the night was not of a nature to produce a soothing sensation. I felt with Charles Wesley, when he wrote

> "God of my life, whose gracious power
> Through varied deaths my soul hath led,
> Or turned aside the fatal hour,
> Or lifted up my sinking head."

It would have been helpful if I could have sung out in this miserable abode, for such it was to me—

> "My song shall wake with opening light,
> And cheer the dark and silent night."

I tossed about nearly all night, and at seven o'clock I turned out to get an early breakfast, and to make my way back to "Wanstead Flats" to have a last peep at my gipsy friends. I arrived about eight o'clock. Some of the show folks and show keepers must have had but little sleep, for I found them moving off the Flats for a run out to their country seats, leaving behind them the seeds of sin, sown by ignorance, fostered by an evil heart, and watered by oaths and curses.

I turned in to have another chat with my gipsy friends, who had taken to house-dwelling, and to listen to their pretty little girl singing as only children can sing

> "Whither, pilgrims, are you going?"

which caused me to undergo a process of screwing up my feeling, and winking and blinking to avoid any sign of weakness becoming visible.

What a blessed future there would be for our gipsies and other vagabonds, if all their children could sing with tear-fetching pathos, "Whither, pilgrims, are you going," in a way that would bring their parents often to their knees!

I bade them good-bye, and made my way back to London and home. I was far from well, and it was fortunate I had sent word over-night to my wife, asking her to meet me part of the way from the station, as I was coming by the last train.

The night was dark, very dark and wet, and with a giddy sensation creeping over me, I stepped out of the train and began to wend my way home, reeling about like a drunken man. I staggered and walked fairly well for more than half the distance, till I felt that I must pull up or I should tumble. For a few minutes I stood by a gate, my forehead and hands felt as cold as a lobster, with a clammy sweat upon them. I felt at my pulse, but the deadness of my fingers rendered them insensible to the throbbings of the human gauge fixed in our wrists.

Not a star in the heavens was visible to send its little twinkling cheer. If the bright brilliant guiding lamps of heaven had receded ten degrees backwards into the dark boundless space, the heavens could not have been darker. Everything was as still as death, and I did not seem to be making any headway at all. Neither sound of man nor horse could be heard. Oh! how I did wish and pray that somebody would pass by to give me a lift. I made another start, and had got as far as a heap of stones on the side of the road, when I felt that if I were to swoon, or to have a fit, or die, it would be better to be off the road. I was just going to sit upon the heap of stones, and

had dropped my "Gladstone bags," when I heard the patter of some little feet in the distance. I pricked up my ears, and shouted out as loud as I could, "Halloo, who's there." The answer came from my wife and little folks, "It is we." I was steadied home between them, and found to my joy a good fire and supper awaiting me. I then thanked God for all His mercies and retired to my couch, feeling as Richard Wilton, M.A., felt when he penned the following lines for the *Christian Miscellany*, 1882—

"Some fruit of labour will remain,
And bending ears shall whisper low,
Not all in vain."

Rambles among the Gipsies at Northampton Races.

IN the midst of doubts and perplexities, sometimes inspired with confidence and at other times full of misgivings, and with my future course completely hidden from me as if I had been encircled by the blackest midnight darkness, with only one little bright star to be seen, I mustered up the little courage left in me; and with great difficulty and many tears of sorrow and disappointment, I started by the first train, with as light a load of troubles as possible under the circumstances, to find my way to Northampton races, to pick up such facts and information relating to the poor little gipsy tramps that Providence placed in my way, or I could collect together.

After the usual jostling, crushing, and scrambling by road and rail, smoke, oaths, betting, gambling, and swearing, I found myself seated in a tramcar in company with one gentleman only, and, strange to say, of the name of "Smith," but not a "gipsy Smith," nor a racing "Smith," of whom there are a few; in fact, there are more gipsies of the name of "Smith" than there are of any other name. It may be fortunate or unfortunate

for me that I cannot trace my lineage to a "gipsy Smith," and that my birthplace was not under some hedge-bottom, with the wide, wide world as a larder that never needed replenishing by hard toil. All required of the "gipsy kings" of the ditch bank, now as in days of yore —so long as the present laws are winked at, and others intended to reach them are shelved—is to "rise, kill, and eat," for to-morrow we die, and the devil take the hindmost. My friend Mr. Smith was left in the car, and I sped my way upon the course. I had not been long in wandering about before I was joined by a respectable-looking old man, who evidently had done his share of hard work on "leather and nails," and was on the look-out for ease and fresh air during the remainder of his pilgrimage to the one of two places in store for him. After a few minutes' conversation about the "ities" and "isms" rampant at Northampton, and our various views upon them, we separated at the edge of the gipsy encampment, wigwams, squalor, and filth. I took the right turning—at least I have no doubt about its proving so in the long run—and he took the left turning; and to this day we have not run against each other again.

The gipsies, *Posh*-gipsies, and Gorgios were hard at work putting up their tents and establishments, and I in the meantime walked and trotted the course in a morning's airing fashion, coming in contact occasionally with a sceptic, infidel, and freethinker. These were turned away in my rough fashion, and my wandering racing meditations brought forth some of the following seeds of thought as I paced backwards and forwards upon the turf. At any rate they are problems, maxims, and aphorisms—such as they are—that have appeared before my vision in my gipsy rambles as I have been working out my gipsy plans, and are, I think, as worthy of a place here as the misleading gipsy lore and lies we have read and heard of.

Some of these will probably die as they bud into life, others may keep green for a little time, and there may be a few that will live and cause a few wanderers to take notes of the journey:

Little, cramped, and twisted ideas of God are the outcome of froth and foam, set in motion by thwarted conceit and mortified vanity.

Vaunted scepticism is the poisonous fungus of decaying minds and rotten ideas.

Infidelity is hellish divinity gone mad.

Nihilists and Fenians are crawlers, who crawl out of rotten heaps of wrongs, which the light of day turns into devil-flies, with fiery hate in their eyes and poisonous stings in their tails.

Socialists and Communists are the rotten toads of society, whose love for the country's welfare consists in inflating themselves till they burst, like the frog in the fable.

Infidels and sceptics are the devil's bats, with one of their wings cropped shorter than the other.

The froth, foams, and fumes of sceptics and infidels are only a little hellish mist that temporarily dims our eye-glasses, which the sun of truth dispels with laughing smiles.

The soft tears of love are the nightly mist-drops of heaven, which the dawn of the eternity turns into the everlasting snowdrops of paradise.

Our godly prayers sent heavenward are preserved by our heavenly Father, and will, on our arrival on the shores of paradise, become the merry pealing bells of heaven which will chime through eternal ages.

In the spirit of disobedience there is an unseen power that can draw down the greatest curse of Heaven.

The spirit of love is a heavenly wand that causes everything to laugh and dance that comes under its influence.

The spirit of hate is a Satanic rod of such baneful influence that it withers and kills everything that it touches.

Our loving, trickling tears of penitence and contrition are being collected by God to form the pure, transparent streams and rivers of joy and gladness which are to run through the celestial city; and those whose lot it has been to shed many upon earth will have increased happiness in heaven from the fact that they have contributed more largely to make heaven more beautiful and lovely by adding to the refreshing streams of paradise.

The prayers of trouble of God's children upon earth are being reset in heaven to angelic music, which, on our landing upon the heavenly shores, are to be our songs of joy and praise.

Selfish, hollow, hypocritical, sleek-tongued deceivers are the four-faced and four-headed Satanic demons of society. Their home is among the mud; they can smile in the sunshine; but their deeds are dirty and poisonous. They are difficult to catch, but more difficult to hold when caught.

Pop-gun liberality, when it is the outcome of a little, bad heart, selfishness, and pride, may be compared to bubbles rising upon putrid waters. In the distance, and with a smiling sun, the various colours present a beautiful enchanting appearance; but as you near them the blackness, fitfulness, and stench is observable, and you turn away disgusted.

A double-headed face without eyes is he who spends a lifetime in wrecking others to hoard up ill-gotten gold, which, when in the last extremity and in fear of being wrecked himself, he throws overboard to some benevolent object, trusting to God's lovingkindness and tender mercies to turn it into a lifeboat that will bring him safe to land.

As the sun is the centre of our solar system of heavenly bodies, giving light to the eleven illuminating planets of various colours, Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Ceres, Pallas, Juno, Vesta, Jupiter, Saturn, and the *Georgium Sidus* moving round it, so in like manner is Love the centre

of the heavenly graces, giving light and beauty to the eleven Christian characteristics, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, industry, honesty, temperance, and chastity.

Every action of retaliation is a bunch of hard prickles, and it has in the centre of it a wasps' nest, and the buzzing of the wasps can be heard and their stings felt by the bystanders; while every act of love is a collection of perfumed, fragrance-scented oils, with a cooing dove on the top as a guard.

Retaliation and revenge are a dark cave, sending forth sulphurous fumes and the groans of hell; while forgiveness and love are a lovely garden of fragrant flowers, with cooing doves and rippling water-brooks in the midst, sending forth heavenly music.

As the process of "inoculation" applied to flowers gives to us the most beautiful-coloured, tinted, edged, and lovely flowers, so in like manner it is with the Spirit of Christ. When once the Spirit of Christ is brought into contact with our human nature, refined sentiment and feelings—the Christian graces—soon become manifest.

As the wind and storm shake off the fruit which has the least hold upon the tree, so in like manner it is with the members of Christian Churches and the State. Those members and citizens the most careless, loveless, and cold, who have the least hold upon the Church, God, and the State, storms and persecution readily bring to the ground.

Death-wishers, with evil hearts, in pursuit of a good man, are the parents and life-bearers of immortal fame, which will sit upon the object of their malice, hate, and spite as a crown of precious jewels; and that which they intended and still intend to be the arrow of death God has turned and is turning into a tree of life, ever budding, blossoming, and teeming with endless delicious fruits.

Hope is the magic Luna of heaven let down and swinging to and fro in earth by golden cords, which answers to the call of young or old, rich or poor, wise or simple, learned or ignorant, and transfers darkness into light, hell into heaven, and devils into saints. Under its power poverty becomes riches, tears of sorrow songs of joy, sickness health, and death life.

The last man stands the first on a backward course.

An idle man is the devil's standard-bearer, and works harder and does more service by his example than any man in the black force.

The first man who arrives at the top of a hill is the man to live the longest, see the most, and enjoy the most happiness.

Mysterious actions, according to the intent of the author, are either the seeds of life or the seeds of death.

As fire and cooking brings out the sweetness of food to make it digestible, so in like manner the fiery trials of affliction bring out the sweetness of a Christian character, making his path through life pleasant, agreeable, and profitable.

Private prayer is the Christian's log, which indicates the rate he travels towards heaven, and Christlike acts of benevolence are the log-book in which his speed is registered.

When a professing Christian dances about among the members of Christian Churches solely for the sake of trade and filthy lucre, it may be taken as an indication that he has stuck a broom upon his masthead, and is open for sale to the highest bidder.

Birds, bees, and wasps pick the finest and sweetest fruit, so in like manner naughty men, women, and children pick at the sweetest children of heaven whom God loves and smiles upon.

False, misleading sentiment is the devil's tonic sol-fa, set to music to suit his hearers.

To keep out of fogs is to live on a hill, so in like manner to keep out of damping thoughts and foggy doubts about God's ways and doings is to live high up in His favour.

As atmospheric influences round marshy spots, rushy swamps, and low meadows produce a meteoric light called "Jack-o'-Lantern," which in the distance looks beautiful to outsiders flitting about in the dark, carried by an unseen hand, but which is dangerous to follow, so in like manner it is with scientific Christianity apart from the Gospel.

A scientific Christian held up as a light without Christ is a "Will-o'-the-Wisp" Christian.

Fawners and flatterers are like dogs that have worms in their tails and wag them to strangers; they are not to be trusted.

A backslider is a tree with three parts of the top cut down, leaving sufficient above ground to serve as a warning to others, or as a post upon which to hang a gate to prevent others passing that way.

If a writer wishes to add lustre to his literary fame, he will best succeed in his purpose by turning "French polisher," instead of becoming a literary thief.

To polish and give artistic touches to a crude cabinet, bringing out its beauty and defects, showing the knots and grain, gives credit to the artist; while to run away with the rough and unpolished jewels it contains, claiming as his own that which belongs to another, brings disgrace and ruin.

To drive successfully along the crooked and zigzag lanes of life, time and space must be taken to go round the corners. Fools can drive along a straight level, but it takes a wise man to round the down-hill corners without a spill over.

Gilt and crested harness does not improve the quality of a poor emaciated, bony, half-starved horse; so in like manner a few Oxford and Cambridge gilt touches put

upon a sensual, backwood gipsy romantic tale, will not improve the condition of our gipsies and their children.

My wandering meditation being over, I now drew myself up to a gipsy "grand stand." To all sensible, good men it appears as a *horrible fall* rather than the "grand stand." Thousands of young men and women, trained by Christian, godly parents, have been brought to ruin by its rotten foundation and evil associations. It is a "stand" from which men and women can see—if they will open their eyes—the wrath of God, the roads to destruction, and the "course" to hell.

My first salutation was from three big grizzly poachers' snaps, a kind of cross between a bloodhound, greyhound, and a bulldog, that lay at the entrance of a wigwam, in which lay a burly fellow marked with small-pox, and whose hair was close shaven off his head and from round his coarse, thick neck. This specimen of an English gipsy possessed a puggish kind of nose, a large mouth, and his clothes seemed "greasy and shiny." The woman looked an intelligent, strong kind of woman, and well fitted, to all appearance, for a better life. Round a tin pot upon the greensward there were three other gipsy tramps, kneeling and gnawing meat off a bone like dogs, with bread by their sides. They did not growl like dogs, but they showed me their teeth and muttered, and this was quite sufficient. The occupation of this gang seemed to be that of attending to a cocoa-nut establishment, the profits of which, during the races, they had travelled from London by road in three days to secure. To me it appeared all were fish that came to their net; and if they did not come of their own accord, they would not think twice before fetching them. This gipsy wigwam was the kitchen, drawing-room, dining-room, bedroom, &c., for four men, one woman, and two big girls, not one of whom could

read and write. The only little gleam of light which shone from the conversation in this dark abode was when they referred to some gipsies, who, they said, had been "putting on a pretence of religion in order to fill their pocket," and they knew one who "saved over £300 since he had been religious." "If I must be religious, I would be religious, and no mistake about it," said another. At this they began to swear fearfully. I mentioned several gipsies who had given up their old habits, and, as I told them, had begun to lead better lives. "Never," they said, with a vengeance; to which I answered, "By their fruits shall ye know them." I then shook hands, and wended my way to the next establishment. This was an old cart covered over entirely with calico from the ridge to the ground. Connected with this van there were two men and a boy, who, it seems, are novices at the cocoa-nut profession. To me it appeared that they were tired of the hard work and tightness of town life, and were trying their fortune at gipsying and idle-mongering. On the course there would be nearly twenty cocoa-nut "saloons." Connected with three of the vans on the course there were sixteen children and eight men and women, only one of whom could read and write. In one of the three vans there was a poor little girl of about nine summers evidently in the last stage of consumption. Her cheeks were sunken, shallow, and pale; her fingers were long and thin; her eyes glassy bright, and black hair hung in tangled masses over her shoulders. I gave the poor girl a penny as she stood at the door of the filthy van, for which, with much effort she said, "Thank you, sir," and sat down on the floor. I said to the mother, formerly a Smith, but now a G——, "Why don't you get the poor child attended to?" She replied as follows: "Well, sir, gipsy children have much more to put up with now than they formerly had. They cannot half stand the cold and

damp we used to do. They are always catching cold. I only bought a bottle of medicine this morning for which I paid half a crown, and I cannot be expected to do more. She has been staying some time with her grandmother at Bristol, but we did not like leaving her there in case anything happened to her. If she is to die, we gipsies like our children to die in the van or tent with us, as may be. We like to see the last of them. We have hard times of it, we poor women and children have, I can assure you, sir. The woman had now begun to do some washing in earnest, not before it was needed, and while she was scrubbing away at the rags in a tin pail, she began to tell me some of her history and that of her grandfather. She said that her mother had "had fifteen children, all born under the hedge-bottom, nearly all of whom are alive." I asked her if any of her family could read and write, and she said, "No, excepting the poor little girl you see, and she can read and write a little, having been to a day school in Bristol for a few weeks last winter. I wish they could read and write, sir, it would be a blessed thing if they could." She now referred to her grandfather. At this her eyes brightened up. She said, "My grandfather was a soldier in the Queen's service"—the poor gipsy woman did not understand history so well as cooking hedgehogs in a patter of clay—"and fought in the battle when Lord Nelson was killed. And do you know, sir, after Lord Nelson was killed, he was put into a cask of rum to be preserved, while he was brought to England to be buried; and I dare say that you will not believe me—my grandfather was one of those who had charge of the body; but he got drunk on some of the rum in which Lord Nelson was pickled, and he was always fond of talking about it to his dying day." I said, "Do you like rum." "Yes, we poor gipsies could live upon rum and 'bacca.'" In the van in which the poor gipsy child and its mother lived there

were a man, a baby a few weeks old, and four other children, huddling together night and day in a most demoralizing and degrading condition. While standing by the side of this tumble-down van I found that vans and tents, in which people eat, live, sleep, and die, are put to other shocking, filthy, and sickening purposes during fairs and races than habitations for human beings to dwell in. Sanitary officers, moralists, and Christians must be asleep all over the country. In going by and round one van I noticed an old woman storming away at some children with an amount of temper and earnestness that almost frightened me. Immediately I arrived at the door, and almost before I could say "Jack Robinson," she dropped down into a position with which miners and gipsies are so familiarly accustomed, and began to tremble, shed "crocodile tears," and tell a pitiful tale of the sorrows and troubles of her life, intermixing it with "my dear sirs," "good mans," "God bless yous." Every now and then she would look up to heaven, and present a picture of the most saintly woman upon earth. When I asked her how old she was, she said she was a long way over seventy, but could not tell me exactly. She further said that she had had sixteen children, all born under the hedge-bottom, nearly all of them gipsies up and down the country, some of whom were grandmothers and grandfathers at the present time. And then she would begin another pitiful tale as follows, "If you please, my good sir, will you give me a copper, I do assure you that I have not tasted anything to eat this day, and I am almost famished with hunger." And then with trembling emotion she said, wringing her hands, "I shall die before morning." After my visits to the other vans, and before going home, I turned unexpectedly to have another peep at the old gipsy woman, whom I found to be a long way off dying, and in all probability I shall see her again before *she passes over to the* great eternity.

Among the rest, sitting upon a low stool and drinking beer, there was a big, bony, coarse Frenchman, whom I found out to be a Communist. He was ostensibly selling calico, lace, and other trifles. His eyes were fiery, mouth ugly, on account of its having been put to foul purposes, and his demeanour that of an excited Fenian maddened by revenge and murder. Round him were a number of poor ignorant folks who could neither read nor write, and as they listened to his lies and infamy about the clergy, ministers, the well-to-do tradesmen, professional gentlemen, noblemen, and royalty, they opened their eyes and mouths as if horrified at his words and actions. Among other things he said the clergy of the Church of England were in receipt of over £20,000,000 per annum out of the pockets of the poor. I questioned him as to the source from which it came, and if he could point out the items in the Budget. At this he began to get excited and said, "It came from direct and indirect taxes." I said, "Can you give me one instance or give me particulars in any shape setting forth the direct taxes in this country collected for the benefit of the clergy to the amount you say?" Instead of replying to this question he began to stutter and stammer, and appeared before me with his fists shut, exhibiting all sorts of mountebank megrims to the terror of some of the listeners and amusement of others. In the end I calmed him down, and he asked me if I would buy a parrot of him if I saw him again in two years' time. One of those who stood by said, "He has got parrots enough of his own without buying more."

Connected with one of the cocoa-nut establishments, and owned by a good-hearted gipsy from London, there were the clowns, fools, hunchbacked old women, and other simpletons to catch the "foolish and the gay." At the back of this establishment there were all sorts of painted devices, or I should rather say "daubed" devices,

upon the sheets, full of satire which the fools with plenty of money could not read. One was a barber shaving his customers; another was a donkey, after he had been well fed, turning his heels towards his silly friends and kicking them in the face and sending them sprawling upon the ground with their pockets empty; and many others with the flags of "Old England" flying in all directions. I learned some time after that the owner of this establishment during the two days' races cleared nearly twenty pounds out of fools and cocoa-nuts, giving thousands of young folks of both sexes a taste for gambling, and then clearing off to London with smiles and chuckles, and his poaching dogs at his heels, leaving his customers to say the next morning, "What fools we have been, to be sure!" If I had been at the door of their bedroom I should have bawled out, "No greater fools in existence could possibly be. When you went upon the race-course you had money if you had not any sense; this morning you have neither money nor sense, and now you are neither more nor less than a third of a shrivelled-up sausage without any seasoning in your nature, unsuitable for pickling and not worth cooking, fit for nothing but the dunghill, and food for cats and dogs." I now took another stroll amongst the gipsies at the other end of the "course," and came up against one who owned the "steam-flying dobby-horses;" but before I began to chat with him one of the gipsy women whispered in my ear, "It is his wife that has made him; she is very good-looking and one of the best women in the world; no one can tell why it was that she took up with the man as his second wife. He would not have been worth twopence had it not been for her. She is a rare good un, an' no mistake. You must not tell him that I say so. She sees to all the business and he dotes over her. He is not a bad sort of a chap." I soon began to chat with the "dobby-horse"

owner, and he was not long before he began to tell me of his cleverness and what he had passed through, as follows: "You see, sir, a few years ago I had to borrow three shillings and sixpence to help me to get away from this town, now I've turned the tide and got at the top of the hill. These "shooting galleries," "dobby-horses," "flying boxes," vans, and waggons are my own." Pointing with his finger to a new van, he said, "I made that myself last winter, and have done all the painting upon the 'horses' myself." The steam organ, the steam whistle, the shouting, screaming, and hurrahing, and his face having been in the wars, made it difficult for me to hear him. He now spoke out louder and referred to family affairs and some of his early history. "I left Bagworth when I was a lad, owing to the cruel treatment of a stepmother, and wandered up and down the country in rags and barefooted, sleeping in barns, and houses, and piggeries, and other places I could creep into; and in course of time I fell in with the gipsies and married one. But she was a wretch; oh! she was a bad un, and I was glad when she died. I am thankful I have got a better one now. She is a good un; but I must not say anything about her, we get on well together, and she keeps me straight." "Bang bang" and "crack crack" went the bullets out of the rifle guns close to our ears, against the metal plates, through a long sheet iron funnel of about twelve inches diameter. "Now then," cried out a little sharp, dark-eyed, nimble woman of about thirty-five years —of course upon this point I had no means of knowing or guessing exactly; I had not examined her teeth. She might say she was only twenty-eight, a favourite age with some maids looking out for husbands—"be quick and rub out the marks upon the plate." And away the old man trotted at his wife's bidding, as all good husbands who are not capable of being masters should do. A "slap" and a

"dash" with the old gipsy's brush, and all the "pops" were for ever obliterated. What a blessed thing it would be for themselves and future generations if all the sins committed upon the racecourse that day could have been wiped out as easily. Why not?

Upon the "course" there were, at a very rough calculation, nearly fifty families of gipsies in vans, tents, and carts, in which vans, tents, &c., there lived over a hundred and fifty children and one hundred men and women sleeping inside and huddling together with their eyes open, like rabbits at the bottom of a flour cask, when no other eye sees them but God's. While the jockeys were riding to death upon classical horses with the devil at their heels, to a place where, as Dr. Grosart says in the *Sunday at Home*, "The surges of wrath crash on the shores infernal," I mused, pondered, and then wended my way home for meditation and reflection, and, as a writer in the *Churchman's Penny Magazine* says—

> "We take Thy providence and word
> As landmarks on our way."

Rambles amongst the Gipsies upon the Warwick Racecourse.

SOME men's lives, it would seem, are decreed by Providence to be spent among the "extremes" of life and the associations of the world. Some are walking, talking, humming, and singing to themselves of the joys of heaven, the pleasures of the world, and the consoling influences of religion under the bright sunlight of heaven, as they, with light tread, step along to the goal where they will be surrounded with endless joy, where the tears of sorrow, bereavement, and anguish are unknown, and where the little dancing, prattling joys of earth have been transplanted into the angelic choir of heaven. There are others to be seen sitting under the shade upon some ditch bank with their elbows upon their knees, and their faces buried in their hands, enveloped in meditation and reflection with reference to the doings and dealings of Providence towards them on their journey of life, with an outlook at times that does not seem the least encouraging and hopeful, ending in mysteries and doubts as to the future, and the part they will be called upon to play in the ending drama. There are many who seem to

be groping their way among the dark and heavy clouds which have been filled by God, in His wisdom, weighted with trouble and circumstances of earth and self; and while pacing among the clouds and darkness which have settled upon them almost too heavy to be borne, they imagine their lot to be the hardest in the world. Such, I thought, has been my lot, as I tripped along, with bag in hand, over the green carpet, while the warbling little songsters were singing overhead, and a bright spring sun shining in my face, bringing life into, on every hand, the enchanting beauty of the orchards, hedgerows, and meadows, sending forth delicious scents, and lovely sights of the daisies, primroses, and violets, and a thousand other heavenly things, on my way to the station on a lovely spring morning to ramble among the gipsies and others upon the Warwick racecourse.

In the train, between Welton and Leamington, I met with some sporting "company's servants." One said, "Y. and G. were two of the greatest scamps in the world. When once the public backed a horse, they were sure to "scratch it.'" They discussed minutely their "bobs," "quids," losses, crosses, and gains. One of the sporting "company's servants" was a guard, and he said, "I generally gets the 'tip' from some of the leading betting men I know, who often travel by my train to the races, and I'm never far wrong." Another "company's servant," related his betting experiences. "One Sunday," said he, "I was at Bootle church, near Liverpool, and heard the preacher mention in his sermon 'Bend Or,' and warned his congregation to have nothing to do with races, and I concluded that there was something in the horse, or he would not have mentioned his name in the pulpit. So on Monday morning I determined to put three 'bob' on 'Bend Or,' and the result was I had twelve 'bob' and a half, that was a good day's work for me, which I should

not have got if it had not been for our parson." I said to the "company's servant," "Do you really think that racing is profitable for those engaged in it, taking all things into consideration?" "Well," he said, "to tell you the truth, sir, I do not think it is. I have often seen dashing, flashing betting characters compelled to leave their boxes at the station in pawn for a railway ticket to enable them to get home."

After leaving the train and the Avenue Station behind me, I made my way to my friends, Mr. and Mrs. John Lewis, for "labour and refreshment," when, during my midnight tossings, nocturnal wanderings, and rambles in wonderland, the following rough and crude germs of thought prevented me getting the "sweet repose which tired nature required:—

The beautiful snowdrop of heaven, and the first in God's garden, is a pretty lively child growing up good and pure in the midst of a wretched family, surrounded by squalor, ignorance, and sin.

They are enemies, and beware of them, who, in your presence, laugh when you laugh, sing when you sing, and cry, without tears, when you cry.

A scientific Christian minister preaching science instead of the gospel, causing his flock to wander among doubts and hazy notions, is a scriptural roadman sitting upon a heap of stones philosophizing with metaphysical skill upon the fineness of the grain, beauty, and excellent qualities of a piece of granite, while the roads he is in charge of are growing over with grass, bewildering to the members of his church as to which is the right road, and leading them into a bog from which they cannot extricate themselves, and have to cry out for the helping hand to save, ere they sink and are lost.

Every glass of beer drunk in a public-house turns a black hair white.

When a man or woman draws the last sixpence out of his or her pocket in a public-house, they pull out a cork that lets tears of sorrow flow.

A publican's cellar is the storehouse of sorrows.

A Christian minister who preaches science instead of Christianity and the Bible, is going through a dark tunnel with a dim lamp at the wrong end of his boat.

Beer and spirits make more gaps in a man's character than righteous women can mend.

The finest pottery has to pass through three crucial stages during manufacture before it can be said to be perfect. First is the "biscuit oven," whereby the vessels are made hard and durable. Second is the "hardening-on kiln," or an oven with an even, moderate heat to harden or burn on the surface the various designs and colours which have been placed there by artistic hands. And the third is the "glost oven," which brings out the transparent gloss and finish, and gives beauty to the gold, oxide, cobalt, nickel, manganese, ochre, stone, flint, bone, iron, and clay, &c. So in like manner it is with the highest type of a Christian character. First, there is the family circle with its moulding and parental influence: this may be called the "biscuit oven," fixing on the preparation for the fights and hardships of life. Second, there is the school and educational progress, which may be compared to the "hardening-on kiln." And third, there is the work of the Holy Spirit: this may be compared to the "glost oven," which gives the gloss, touch, and transparency to the vessel. Each of these stages will include the progressive steps of manufacture leading up to them.

Spectacles are of no use to a man in the dark. So in like manner scientific problems cannot help a man to see his way if he is in spiritual darkness.

Acrobatic Christians are those whose spiritual backbone

and moral uprightness have been damaged by contortions, megrims, twirlings, and twisting their Christian character to suit circumstances.

So long as a man keeps upright the law of gravitation has but little power over him; immediately he begins to stoop its influence is soon manifest. So in like manner it is with an upright Christian, and so long as he keeps his perpendicular position by walking erect in God's love and favour he is all right, and the influence of hell trebled cannot bend or pull him down; immediately he stoops to listen to the voice of the charmer, and gives way to the gravitation of hell—sin—down he goes, and nothing but a miracle will bring him upright again.

A hollow, hypocritical, twirl-about Christian, with no principle to guide him, is as an empty, shallow vessel pushed out to sea without either compass, rudder, or sails.

A man who, Christ-like, stoops to pick up a fallen brother, or who guides and places a youth upon a successful path, leading to immortality, is a man among men whom God delights to honour, as Jupiter was among the heathen gods, and he will be doubly crowned. His crown upon earth will be studded with lasting pleasure, shining brighter than diamonds; but his crown in heaven will be studded and illumined with the everlasting smiles of those he has saved, surpassing in grandeur all the precious stones in creation.

When a professing Christian visits the tap-room and places of light amusement with the hope of finding safe anchorage from the storms of life, it may be taken as an indication that he is at sea without a rudder, and the temporary one manufactured in a gin-palace out of frothy conversation will not bring him safe to land.

To hold up good works without faith and prayer as a shelter from an angry God for wrong-doing, is like holding

a riddle over your head as a protection from a thunder-storm.

A man indulging in a lifetime of sin and iniquity, and then praying to God and giving alms in the last hours of his existence in the hope of securing eternal life and endless joy, is like a fowl with a broken neck and wings struggling to pick up golden grain to give it life and strength to fly to roost.

Love and spite dwelling in the heart can no more make a perfect Christian than poisoned vinegar and cream can make pure honey.

Every huntsman who jumps a fence makes it easier for those who choose to follow; and so it is with wrongdoers who jump the bounds of sin and folly. They are teaching those who follow to shun the plain, open path, and to take to the walls, fences, and ditches, which end in a broken neck, amidst the applause of fools.

Hotbeds of envy and hatred, heated with burning passion, have been productive of more evil results, direful consequences, bloodshed, cruel deaths, and foul murders than all the poison extracted from fungi, hemlock, fox-gloves, and deadly nightshade have done since the world began, or could do, even if envy and hatred were to die to-day and poisons worked death to the end of time.

The morals and good deeds of a wicked, sensual, selfish man are the artificial flowers of hell.

Some professing Christians have only sufficient Christianity to make a pocket mirror, which the possessor uses in company as a schoolboy would to make "Jack-a-dandies."

Crowns of credit or renown lightly won sit lightly upon the head, and are easily puffed off by the first breath of public opinion.

A man who trusts to his own self-righteousness to get him to heaven is wheeling a heavily and unevenly laden

wheelbarrow up a narrow, slippery plank over a deep ravine, with a wheel in the front of his wheelbarrow that is twisted, loose, and awry.

The devil plays most with those he means to bite the hardest.

Singing heavenly songs in earthly sorrows brings joy tinged with the golden light of heaven on the mourner.

To get the cold, poisonous water of selfishness from our hearts God has often to furrow and drain our nature and affections by afflictions and cross purposes.

Too-much conceited young Christians with little piety, like young "quickset" hedges, become of more use to the Christian Church and the world after they have been cut down by persecution and bent by troubles and afflictions.

Sin in the first instance is as playful as a kitten and as harmless as a lamb; but in the end it will bite more than a tiger and sting more than a nest of wasps.

A Christian professor outside the range of miracles and under the influence of the devil is he who is trying to swim to heaven with a barrel of beer upon his back.

As fogs are bad conductors of light, sight, and sound, so in like manner is a Christian living in foggy doubts a bad conductor of the light, sight, and sounds of heaven.

Cold, slippery Christians who have no good object before them, and without a noble principle to guide them, are like round balls of ice on a large dish; and to set such Christians to work is a worse task than serving the balls out with a knitting needle.

Crotchety, doubting, scientific Christians are manufacturers of more deadly poisons than that produced from pickled old rusty nails.

The loudest and most quickening sounds to be heard upon earth are from a beautiful sweet child as it lies in the stillness of the loving arms of death.

Breakfast being over, with my "Gladstone bag" I

began my tramp-trot to the "course," and while walking leisurely under the tall trees in one of the avenues at Leamington, on my way to the racecourse, a circumstance occurred—which my friend the gipsies say "forbodes good luck and a fortune, and that I shall rise in the world and have many friends." Gipsies say and do queer things. To see, say they, the tail of the first spring lamb instead of its face forebodes "bad luck" to the beholder through the year. In the tramcar there was a little dog with a silver collar round its neck, evidently without an owner. The pretty little white English terrier whined about in quest of its master or mistress, but neither was to be found. In the tramcar there was a police inspector on his way to do double duty at the racecourse. This kind-hearted man tried hard by coaxing, sop, and caresses to be a friend to the dog; but no, and for the life of him the dog could not be brought round to look upon the inspector as a friend. Immediately the tramcar stopped, the little dog bounded off in search of its owner, but none was to be found, and the last I saw of the inspector and the lost dog was up one of the streets at Warwick, with the dog ahead and its tail between its legs, and the inspector scampering after it as fast as he could run, calling out, "Stop it," "Stop it," "It's lost;" and away they both went out of sight, and neither the one nor the other have I seen since.

I once worked for a master in the slave yards of Brickdom in Staffordshire, who owned a bulldog. This dog took it into his head one day to leave its cruel master, and seek fresh lodgings of a better kind. Spying its opportunity, off it started out of the brickyard as if it was shot out of a gun; and the master for whom I slaved could not whistle, and knowing that I could whistle as well as I could cry and sing, bawled out to me, "Whistle

him, whistle him, or I'll black your eye! I've lost a dog worth five shillings; whistle him!" Of course, under the circumstances, trembling with fear and fright, I could not "whistle" very loud. The consequence was, the dog was lost, and I got a "good kick and a punch." If the inspector could have whistled for the lost dog in the tones of its mistress, it would have saved his legs and brought the dog back to its comfortable home.

I was no sooner upon the racecourse, paddling through the quagmire, than I was brought face to face with some of the gipsies—the Hollands and the Claytons. I had not long been talking to them before one of the old Hollands came up to me and said, "I know who you are, Mr. Smith of Coalville; lend's your hand, and let's have a good shake. I would not mind giving five shillings for your likeness." I told him he need not be at the expense of giving five shillings for a flattering photograph; he could have a good stare at the original, with all its faults, blemishes, and scars, for nothing. In my hands were a lot of picture cards for the gipsy children, given to me by the Religious Tract Society, upon which were a lot of texts of Scripture, in pretty patterns. Some of them read as follows: "My son, forget not my law;" "Thou art my trust from my youth;" "Thou God seest me;" "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet;" "My son, give me thine heart;" "Wisdom is more precious than rubies;" "Enter not into the path of the wicked;" "Even a child is known by his doings;" "Feed my lambs;" "Hear instruction, and be wise;" "Show piety at home;" "The Lord bless and keep thee;" "The Lord preserveth all them that love Him;" "I will guide thee with mine eye;" "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil;" and many more. Immediately I had begun to distribute them among the children clustered round me, Alfred Clayton came up to me, as close as he could get, and

he said, as I read out some of the texts to the children, "I do like them; I could die by them; I'd sooner have some of them than a meal's meat at any time. Do give me some, Mr. Smith, and I'll get somebody to read them to me, and will take great care of them. I'll have them framed and hung up." The Hollands now asked me to go into their van, which invitation I gladly accepted. I was no sooner seated than Mrs. Holland, a big strong woman with pipe in her mouth, began to tell me how many children they had had, and that she had "been a nurse for the Lord," for she had "had twelve children, nine of whom had died before they were three years old, and three are living, two of whom you see." At this point she flew off at a tangent in language not suited for this book. Any one hearing her would think that she was a somewhat queer and strange kind of "nurse for the Lord." Mr. Holland the elder told me of one poor gipsy woman, who, through her unfaithfulness and bad conduct, had come to an untimely end, so much so that it was with much difficulty and risk her rotten remains were placed in a coffin. Sad to say, her sins were not buried with her. Her family carry the marks upon them. After chatting about all sorts of things and old times, with the Leicestershire gipsies from Barlestone and Barwell, I turned in with some gipsy Smiths from Gloucestershire, whose van and tents were on the other side of the "grand stand." I found that in three of the vans there were twenty-one children of various sizes and ages, and nine men and women sleeping and huddling together in wretchedness. One of the gipsy women told me that she had had "nineteen children all born alive." As they sat round the fire upon the grass, I began to give them some cards, and while I was doing so, one of the men, Reservoir Smith, broke out in language not very elevating, and said among other things, "What use are picture

cards to either the children or us; there is not one in the whole bunch that can tell a letter; and as for saying prayers, they do not know what it is and where to begin. We cannot pray ourselves, much less teach our children. Who are we to pray to? Parsons pray, and not we poor folks." A gipsy woman must needs have her say in the matter, and said as follows, "Do not mind what he says, master, if you will give me some of the cards we will have them framed; they will do to look at if we cannot read them." At this they clustered round me—men, women and children; and I distributed cards and pence to the little ones as far as my stock would allow, with which all were delighted.

In the midst of this large group of idle men and women, ragged, dirty, unkempt, and ignorant children with matted hair, there were two of the Smith damsels—say, of about eighteen or twenty years—dressed in all the gay and lively colours imaginable, whose business was not to attend to the cocoa-nut "set outs," but to wheedle their way with gipsy fascination amongst the crowd of race-goers, to gain "coppers" in all sorts of questionable ways of those "greenhorns" who choose to listen to their "witching" tales of gipsydom. Their "lurchers" and "snap" dogs came and smelt at my pantaloons, and skulked away with their tails between their legs.

Upon the course there were over thirty adult gipsies, and nearly forty children living in tents and vans, and connected in one way or other with the gipsy Smiths, Greens, Hollands, Stanleys, and Claytons, not one of whom—excepting one Stanley—could read and write a simple sentence out of any book, and attended neither a place of worship nor any Sunday or day school. When I explained to them the plan I proposed for registering their vans, and bringing the children within reach of the schoolmaster, they one and all agreed to it without any

hesitation, and said as follows, that "it would be the best thing in the world, and unitedly expressed more than once, "Thank you, sir," "Thank you, sir."

Rain was now coming down, and the races were about to commence; therefore my gipsy congregation had begun to find its way to the various cocoa-nut establishments to begin business in earnest. With this exodus going on around me, and in the midst of oaths, swearing, betting, banging, cheating, lying, shouting, and thrashing, I turned quickly into Alfred Clayton's van to have a friendly chat with him with "closed doors." The conversation I had with him earlier in the afternoon led me to think that some kind of influence had been at work with him that one does not see in a thousand times among gipsies. Evidently a softening process had taken hold of him which I wanted to hear more about. With his wife and another gipsy friend in charge of his cocoa-nut business, we closed the door of the van, and he began his tale in answer to my questions. I asked him whether they had always been gipsies. To which he answered as follows: "My grandfather was a 'stockiner' at Barlestone, and lived in a cottage there; but in course of time he began to do a little hawking, first out of a basket round the villages, and then in a cart round the country. He then took to a van; and the same thing may be said of the Claytons. Originally they were 'stockiners" at Barwell, a village close to Barlestone, and began to travel as my grandfather and father had done. Thus you will see that the two families of gipsies, Claytons and Hollands, are mixed up pretty much. My father is, as you know, a Holland, and my mother a Clayton, whose name I take. At the present time, out of the original family of Hollands at Barlestone, and the original family of Claytons at Barwell, there are seven families of Hollands travelling the country at the present time, and fifteen families of Claytons travelling in

various parts of Staffordshire and other places." From the original two families it will be seen that there are over a hundred and fifty men, women, and children who have taken to gipsying within the last fifty years, not half a dozen of whom can read and write, with all the attendant consequences of this kind of a vagabond rambling life; which the more we look into, it is plain that Christianity and civilization, as we have put them forth to reclaim those of our own brothers and sisters near home, have proved a failure, not on account of the blessed influences of themselves being not powerful enough, but in the lack of the application of them to the gipsies by those who profess to have received those world-moving principles in their hearts. In the midst of this dark mass of human beings moving to and fro upon our lovely England, one little cheering ray is to be seen. Alfred Clayton tells us this. When he was staying at Leicester with his van some three years since, he stole like a thief in the night into the "Salvation Warehouse" at the bottom of Belgrave Gate, and while he was there an influence penetrated through the hardened coats of ignorance and crime, and the ramification of sin in all its worst shape to the depth of his heart, and awakened a chord of sympathy in his nature which has not died out, or wholly left him to this day. "Jesus the name high over all" caused him to open his ears in a manner they had never been opened before, and wonder what it all meant. This visit to the "Salvation warehouse" was not lost upon him, or without its effects upon his conduct. One cold wintry day, some two years ago, he was staying with his wife and family in this van on the roadside between Atherstone and Hinckley, when a youth, apparently about eighteen years old, came limping along the road, dressed in what had once been a fashionable suit of clothes, but now was little better than rags. His face was thin and pale, and his fingers long, and his neck bare. Upon his feet were two odd

old worn-out shoes, and without stockings upon his legs; and as the forlorn youth neared the van and its occupants at dusk, he said, "Will you please give me a bit of bread, for I feel very hungry." Clayton said, without much inquiry and hesitation, "Come into the van and warm yourself," and while the youth was doing so, they got ready a crust of bread and cheese and some tea, which were devoured ravenously. Clayton learned that the stranger was related to one of the leading manufacturers named —— at Leicester, and well known as being rich; but unfortunately for the poor youth, his father died, and his stepmother had sold everything and cleared away to America, leaving this well-educated lad without any money, or means of earning money, to grapple with the world and its difficulties for a livelihood as best he could. Clayton, in the kindness of his heart, took the youth into the van, and he travelled up and down the country with them as one of their own during the space of two years, when owing to "his being a gentleman," and a "capital scollard," he was helpful to the gipsy family in more ways than one. After the two years' gipsying spent by the youth with his kind friends the Claytons in rambling about the country, some kind friends at Atherstone took pity on him, and he is there to-day, gradually working his position back into civilized society, and a respectable member of the community, notwithstanding the treatment he has received at the hands of his cruel stepmother. After the meeting at the "Salvation Warehouse" Clayton had been seen and heard more than once, checking swearing and other sins so common to gipsies; but had never finally decided to leave gipsying and begin a better life until last Christmas. The steps which led up to his "great resolve," he related to me as follows: "Mr. Smith, you must know that I have been about as bad a man as could be found anywhere. I felt at times, through drink and other things, that I would

as soon murder somebody as I would eat my supper; in fact, I didn't care what I did; and things went on in this way till my little girl, about three years old, and who I loved to the bottom of my heart, was taken ill and died. She had such bright eyes, a lovely face, and curls upon her head. She was my darling pet, and always met me with a smile; but she died and lies buried in Polesworth churchyard." At this Clayton burst into crying and sobbing like a child. "I vowed," said Clayton, "on the day, at the side of the grave, she, my poor darling, was buried, that I would not touch drink for a month, and do you know, Mr. Smith of Coalville, when the month was gone, I did not feel to crave for drink any more, and I have not had any up till now." He now dried his eyes, and his face brightened up with a smile, and I said to him in the van, "Let us kneel down and thank God for helping you to make this resolution, and for grace to help you to keep it." In the midst of the hum, shouting, and swearing of the races, we shut the door of the van; and after we had got off our knees, he knelt down again and again, and began to pray, with tears in his eyes, as follows:—

"O Lord Jesus, Thou knowest that I have been a bad sinner. O God, thou knowest I have been very wicked in many ways, and done many things I should not have done; but Thou hast told me to come to Thee and Thou wilt forgive me. Do my God forgive me for all the wrong I have done, and help me to be a better man, and never touch drink again any more, for Thou knowest it has been my ruin. Help me to live a good life, so that I may meet my little darling in heaven, who lies in Polesworth churchyard. Do, O Lord, bless my wife and my other little children, and make them all good. Oh do, my heavenly Father help my mother to give over swearing and bad things. Thou canst do it. Do Thou bless my father, and my brothers, and all my relations, and Mr. Smith

in his work, and for being so good to us, so that we may all meet in heaven, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

"Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

After Clayton had dried his eyes we got up, to behold, over the top of the bottom half of his van door, the riders, dressed in red, scarlet, yellow, green, blue, crimson, and orange, with a deep *black shade* to be seen *underneath*, galloping to hell with hordes of gamblers at their heels as fast as their poor, cruelly treated steeds could carry them, all leaving footprints behind them for young beginners to follow. I said to Clayton, "Are you not tired of this kind of life?" And he said he was. "It is no good for anybody," said Clayton, "and I am going to leave it. This is my last day with the 'cocoa-nuts.' I shall start in the morning—Saturday—for Coventry and Atherstone, where I mean to settle down and bring my children up like other folks. I have taken a house and am going to furnish it, and a gentleman is going to give me a chance of learning a trade, for which I thank God."

As the shouts of the hell-bound multitude were dying away, and the gains and losses reckoned up, Clayton's three little gipsy children, with their lovely features, curls, and bright blue eyes, came toddling up the steps to the van door, calling out, "Dad, let us in; dad, let us in." The door was opened, and the little dears comfortably seated by our side. I gave them a few pictures, some coppers, stroked their hair, and "chucked their chin," and bade them good-bye in the midst of a shower of rain,

to meet again some day with the bright sun shining overhead and a clear sky without a cloud to be seen anywhere. For the present I must say with John Harris in his *Wayside Pictures*—

> "Where Thou leadest it is best;
> Cheer me with the thought of rest,
> Till I gain the upper shore,
> And my *tent* is struck no more."

Rambles among the Gipsies at Boughton Green Fair.

I HAD heard much and often about the Boughton Green Fair, and the vast number of gipsies, semi-gipsies, and other tramps, scamps, vagabonds, hawkers, farmers, tradesmen, the fast and loose, riff-raff and respectable, gathered together from all quarters once a year upon this ancient Green for a "fairing." Tradesmen and farmers exhibited their wares, live stock, and implements of husbandry; and others set forth their articles of torture, things of fashion, painted faces, "tomfoolery," and "bosh," to those who like to tramp thither in sunshine and storm with plenty of money in their pockets for revel and debauch.

Bidding the sparrows, linnets, swallows, and wagtails, fluttering and darting round our dwelling, good-bye as they were hopping, chirping, twittering, and gathering a variety of materials upon which to build their nests; and with my little folks at the door, I wended my way to the station.

> "Then he kissed his olive branches,
> Bade his wife good-bye,
> And said, . . .
> 'Heaven preserve you all!'"
>
> *Wayside Pictures* (HARRIS).

The sun was shining warmly, the roads dusty, and a few red faces covered with perspiration were to be seen panting along. Many of the men were dressed in black cloth, a little faded, of the "cut" and fashion out of date many years ago. Some had their coats hung upon their arm, with white shirt sleeves and heavy boots everywhere visible. Most fairly well-to-do farm labourers have for Sundays and mourning days a black suit, which lasts them for many years. In some instances the father's black clothes become family "heirlooms"—at any rate, for a time—and then, when the father dies, they are turned into garments for the little children. Of course the father's "black silk furred hat" cannot be made less, and to pad it to make it fit little Johnny's head is an awkward process. I have seen many *little boys* with big hats upon their heads in my time. I suppose they have imagined that people would infer that they had big heads under the hats with plenty of brain power. This is a mistake. Big hats, with little brain and less common sense, and No. 10 rather high, often go together. Upon the road would be "Our Sal" with her "chap," and his brother Jim, yawning, shouting, and gaping along, and, as my friends the boatmen would say, "a little beerish." Some of the country labouring girls would have their shawls upon their arms, and they would be stalking along in their strong boots at the rate of four miles an hour, frolicking and screaming as Bill Sands, Jack Jiggers, Joe Straw, Matt Twist, and Ben Feeder jostled against them. They seemed to delight in showing the tops of their boots, with crumpled and overhanging stockings. There were other occupants of the road trudging limpingly after the cows, sheep, horses, donkeys, and mules, called "tramps" and "drovers," who seemed to be, and really are, the "cast-offs" of society. These poor mortals were, as a rule, either as thin as herrings or as bloated as

pigs, with faces red with beer-barrel paint; and they wore gentlemen's "cast-off" clothing in the last stages of consumption, with rags flying in the wind. Their once high-heeled boots were nearly upside down, while dirty toes, patches, and rag-stuffing were everywhere visible.

In the train there was the usual jostle, bustle, and crush, and gossip. At Northampton station there was no little commotion, owing to the station-master having closed the station-yard against all cabs except those who ply regularly between the station and the town.

One cabman came to me and said that he would take me to the Green for a less fare than he charged others if I would get into his cab the first. I asked him his reason. "Because," he said, "if you get in first others will follow, and I shall soon have a load." I could not see the force of his argument, and found my way to another cab. I had no sooner seated myself than the cabman took off, or hid, his number. I asked him why he did that. His answer was, "So that if I drive fast the Bobbies shan't catch the sight of my number. If they get my number and I am caught driving fast there will be either thirty 'bob' for me to pay, or I shall have to go to 'quad' for a fortnight."

Some of the poor horses attached to the vehicles—cabs, waggonettes, carriers carts, carriages—were heavily laden with human beings, till they could scarcely crawl. Uphill, down dale, slashing, dashing, banging, whipping, kicking, and shouting seemed to be the order of the day; and on this vast mass of human and animal life poured—and myself among the crowd—till I found we were fairly among the gipsies upon the Green.

Having partaken of a starvation lunch in one of the booths, consisting of "reecy" fat ham, with a greasy knife and fork, dried bread and lettuce, served upon plates not over clean, and studded and painted with patches of mus-

tard left by a former customer, and with warm ginger-beer as tame as skim milk to take the place of champagne, I began to take stock of the Green, which natural formation, together with those made apparently hundreds of years ago, seemed to excite my first attention.

The large circular holes, of about thirty feet diameter and one foot below the level of the surrounding ground, reminded me very much of ancient gipsy encampments. Boughton Green has been a favourite annual camping ground for generations, and may to-day be considered as the fluctuating capital of gipsydom in the Midlands, where the gipsies from all the Midland and many other counties do annually congregate to fight, quarrel, brawl, pray, sing, rob, steal, cheat, and, in past times, murder.

According to Wetton's "Guide to Northamptonshire," published some fifty-six years ago, it seems probable that the fair was formerly set out in canvas streets, after the manner of a maze, shepherd's-race, or labyrinth; and as Boughton Green was close to a Roman station, this seems probable. This was the custom of the Roman fairs held close to their stations. This much seems to be inferred from Baker's "History of Northamptonshire," where he says, "The stretching canvas forms the gaudy streets."

In the *Northampton Mercury*, June 5, 1721, the following advertisement appears: "The Right Hon. the Earl of Strafford has been pleased to give a bat, value one guinea, to be played for on Monday at cudgels, and another of the same price; and also 6 pairs of buckskin gloves at 5s. a pair, to be wrestled for on Tuesday; and a silver cup of the value of 5 guineas price to be run for on Wednesday by maiden galloways not exceeding 14 hands high, during the time of Boughton Fair. The ladies of the better rank to meet to raffle, see the shows, and then to adjourn to a ball at the Red Lion Inn, Northampton, in the evening."

In Baker's "History of Northamptonshire" the following poem appears relative to the fair—

"From every part stretched o'er the sultry way,
The labouring team the various stores convey.
Vessels of wood and brass, all bright and new,
In merry mixture rise upon the view.
See! pots capacious lesser pots entomb,
And hogsheads barrels gorge for want of room;
From their broad base part in each other hid
The lessening tubs shoot up like a pyramid.
Pitchforks and axes and the deepening spade
Beneath the pressing load are harmless laid;
Whilst out behind, where pliant poles prevail,
The merry waggon seems to wag her tail."

Looked at from rising ground, far in the distance, and with a keen sense for the picturesque and romantic, the moral and physical aspects of nature, and love of liberty, which gipsy life presents to those few unacquainted with its dark, degrading side—thank God, only a few—are food for admiration and wonder; to others the objects of pity and suggestive reflection. There can be no doubt that Cowper, the immortal poet, who lived at Olney, a few miles from Boughton Green and Higham Ferrers, as he was wont to take his daily walks, would often cross the path of the Northamptonshire gipsies. Sometimes there would accompany him his two lady friends who were jealous of each other's influence—Lady Austin and Mrs. Unwin. Occasionally Lady Hesketh and some of the Throckmortons would be the cheerful companions in his despondency and gloom, and at other times he would sally forth single-handed in quest of food for his hares and leverets, in silent meditation upon the grand and beautiful surroundings. It is more than probable that while he saw from the beautiful elevation, a few miles outside Olney and Weston, the grey smoke rising from the gipsy encampment in the distance silently and quietly whirling, twirling, and ascending among the trees, to be lost among

the daisies and hedgerows, the muses danced before him and brought forth the truthful, characteristic poem relating to gipsies—

"I see a column of slow rising smoke
O'ertop the lofty wood that skirts the wild.
A vagabond and useless tribe there eat
Their miserable meal. A kettle
Slung between two poles, upon a stick transverse
Receives the morsel; flesh *obscene* hog
Or vermin; or at best of cock purloined
From his accustomed perch. Hard-faring race
They pick their fuel out of every hedge
Which, kindled with dry leaves and wood, just saves
The spark of life. The sportive wind blows wide
Their fluttering rags, and shows a tawny skin
The vellum of the pedigree they claim."

The publication of this poem, and the fact that large numbers of gipsy tramps were flitting about the country, with their wretched equipages, may have been the means of stirring the kind hearts of Smith, Crabb, Hoyland, William Allen, of Higham Ferrers, solicitor, and steward to Earl Fitzwilliam, and many others, some eighty or one hundred years ago, to try to reclaim the gipsies from their debasing habits and customs.

It has generally been supposed that the term "green," given to the land upon which the annual fair is held, comes to us at this date on account of its greensward. This is an error. According to Baker's and other histories of Northamptonshire, Boughton Green derives its name and title as follows. "In the time of Edward I., William de Nutricilla, abbot of St. Wandegisile, conveyed the lands to John de Boketon or Boughton, from whom they descended to Sir Thomas de Boketon his grandson, and who was succeeded by Sir Henry Green his son and heir, who was Lord Chief Justice of England." Thus we see the probability of it being called at this ancient date, on

account of the close relationship existing between the Boketon or Boughton and Green, Boughton and Green's wake or fair. In course of time the "and" has been dropped, and we have now "Boughton Green fair."

"Sir Henry Green obtained a grant or charter, dated 28th February, 1351 (25 of Edward III.), for an annual fair to be held on the manor for the space of three days, beginning with the vigil of the nativity of St. John the Baptist (June 23rd), and ending the day after it." This being so, the adding of "green" to the fair can be easily accounted for. The site upon which the fair is held is seventeen acres.

Outside, and at the east end of the fair grounds, stands the remains of what was once, no doubt, a fine old Gothic church, dedicated then, as the new church in the village is now, to St. John the Baptist. The tower and spire of the old church fell about a century ago upon a gipsy Smith and his wife, whose sleeping quarters—instead of the gipsy tent—had been for some time beneath its crumbling ruins. The old villagers will tell you, with pride and pleasure upon their faces, that Boughton old church was, before Cromwell destroyed it, one of the seven oldest churches in England. Of course, this is a subject upon which I do not feel to be "master of the situation." Such was the odium attached to gipsies a century ago, that it was not thought worth while to dig them out from beneath the mass of ruins that had fallen upon them; and from the time when the tower and spire fell, to the time when the crumbling refuse was cleared away a few years since, the bones of poor gipsy Smith and his wife had crumbled into dust and been scattered to the winds. It touches a tender and sympathetic chord, and draws forth a scalding tear down one's face when one ponders over the many evenings the old gipsy couple had enjoyed their frugal meal—maybe of hedgehogs and snails, or the piece of

a decaying pig—beneath the belfry, when the bells were pealing forth, soft and low, as the shades of evening were gathering round them, and they were preparing to rest their aimless and useless bones upon the straw in their dark, at times musical, and at other times dismal, abode among the dead. The churchyard and burial ground round the old church is well fenced in, and kept in beautiful order. Several gipsies are buried in the churchyard; but there is no stone to mark the exact spot. They are pretty close to each other, so I am told, at the east end of the church.

Close to the churchyard there is a spring of excellent water, called St. John's Spring. So highly did our forefathers value it, that it was preserved specially as a rippling little fountain for supplying water for the holy rite of baptism. When I saw it, gipsies, tramps, show people, vagabonds, and all kinds of dirty and clean travellers, with their wretched companions, steeds, and poor bony beasts of burden, were quenching their thirst at this living stream, forcing its way out of the hillside. It seemed, as I stood by, looking at the pails put under its mouth for a filling, to force its way faster, and with greater gusto, delight, and pleasure into the dirty pails, owned by dirty hands and dirtier faces, whose filthy bodies were covered with stinking rags, than into clean pails carried by white hands and lovely smiling faces peering over them. One little dirty urchin put his mouth under it for "a drink." No sooner was this done, than the holy spring covered his unholy dirty face with more clear water than he wanted, some of which found its way down his bosom and into his breeches; at this he "sobbed," and sobbed right out that I could not help laughing. He turned up his piebald watery face as if in anger at my laughing at him. I said to him, "What is the matter with you?" "No—no—no—no—nought is the matter

wi me. It's co—co—co—cold, and you woodner laugh if you were like me. It's wet my belly."

The little fellow for once received a washing, contrary, no doubt, to his wish. After he had dried his face with the ragged remains of a dirty sleeve, he found his way back to the green—I expect his mother would scarcely know him—and I went for a stroll down "Spectacle Lane," where gipsies formerly tented and camped in large numbers.

Down this pretty country lane there was a pleasant recess, a little higher than the road, under the trees, evidently formed by the gipsies on purpose to have their "tents high and dry." Several tents could be nicely sheltered and partly secluded under the trees in each recess. Water and game would be plentiful in these lanes a century ago; in fact, I should imagine such was the case now.

At the bottom of "Spectacle Lane" stood a large, fine, old Gothic archway, called by the inhabitants in the neighbourhood "Spectacle Tower." The object and purpose for which it was built has never been clearly made out. Judging from all the surrounding circumstances, it appeared to me that it had at one time been intended as a gateway to a mansion, abbey, or nunnery which has not been built; or, what is still more probable, it may have been erected as a flag-tower for Fairfax's army on its way from Oxford through Northampton to the battle of Naseby, and from thence to Leicester. Prince Rupert had gone as far as Daventry to meet General Fairfax and his army, expecting, of course, that they would come by Daventry; instead of which Fairfax left Daventry to the left, and pushed on his way through Northampton and to Boughton Green, hoping to arrive in Leicester before Prince Rupert and the King. Fairfax may have expected that the memorable battle would have been fought in the neighbourhood

of Boughton; if so, he, at any rate, reckoned without his host, as both armies came together at Naseby, and with what result any schoolboy knows.

Report says that Boughton Green church was razed to the ground by Cromwell's army.

The fact of gipsies flocking to this, which was once a fine old Roman Catholic church, and nestling in tents under its shadows, together with the fact that old, monastic-looking farm-houses are to be seen in the neighbourhood, confirms the idea I set forth in my "Gipsy Life," p. 146, viz., that on the gipsies landing in Scotland, about the year 1514, from the continent, some of them hypocritically professed the Roman Catholic faith in order to inveigle themselves into the good graces of the nobility, so that their pockets and pouches might be filled with as little trouble as possible; in fact, righteous gipsy Smith having come from India, he knew well, and does so still, how to turn religious sentiment to advantage, and hence he landed in Scotland from France as above instead of Dover and London, and wended his way through the Midland counties and southward; and hence we find Northamptonshire, in times later on, a central camping ground for these lawless tribes of aimless vagabonds.

About a century ago a number of gipsies were brought before the magistrates at Northampton; upon what charge has not been stated. This so enraged the gipsies upon Boughton Green and other parts of Northamptonshire, that they threatened to set fire to the town of Northampton. The end of it was that several of the gipsies, for their riotous conduct, forfeited their lives upon the gallows. See "Gipsy Life," p. 154.

To come back to Boughton Green fair. After having wandered about "Spectacle Lane" I called upon a gentleman, Mr. Jeys, who has resided for many years close to the green, and he told me that he has seen as many as

forty to fifty tents and vans of gipsies camping in the lanes near to his house. It was down this lane that small-pox raged among the gipsies. Righteous Smith, with his two wives, Constant and Comfort, and a number of their twenty children, died of small-pox. Births, deaths, and murders have taken place upon the green. How many nobody knows, nor can any idea be formed of the number. Mr. Jeys told me of one case, being a gipsy row, ending in murder. Who had done it no one could tell, and where the gipsy was buried was a mystery. They hunted and searched, but, like the body of the Earl of Crauford and Balcarres, it could not be found, until Mr. Jeys' gardener came across it in the garden. When the body of the gipsy was found it was laid straight out between two flag stones reared edgewise, and a large flag-stone as a covering. The arms were folded, and upon the breast of the gipsy there was a pair of scissors, which had been carefully placed there by those who had buried the gipsy in the dark; for what purpose I cannot make out. Gipsies have queer notions about the death and burial of those belonging to them. The old-fashioned gipsies of bygone days, more than they do now, paid special regard to the dead, and on this account they carried the dead body of the gipsy nearly half a mile to bury it in a gentleman's garden. The murdered gipsy in his lifetime was, no doubt, a scissor-grinder, and the placing of the scissors upon his breast was to remind them when he got to the other country of what trade the gipsy was—*i.e.*, if skulking about the country with an old barrow grinding a few knives and scissors can be called a trade.

A few years since a gentleman farmer belonging to the neighbourhood was murdered upon the green, by whom it has never been found out. All sorts of conjectures, suspicions, and surmises have taken place upon the matter. Some say the gipsies did it; others say that some of the

unfortunate class had a hand in the sad affair. At any rate he was found early next morning with his mouth crammed full of dust; his pockets were empty, and his soul had gone into the unknown world. His name is engraved upon the trunk of a tree close to the spot, which, owing to the growth of the tree and the hand of time, is fast disappearing. The greensward of Boughton Green is not a bed of roses; but, on the contrary, I am afraid, those who have met their last enemy upon this battle-ground of scamps have found it full of thorns—for such it has been to those who have been murdered or met with death in doubtful company.

At the fair held in 1826, George Catherall, of Bolton, who was known as Captain Slash, formed a large gang of about a hundred roughs—of whom it was composed, young or old, it has not been stated, or whether any, and how many of them, were gipsies—to rob and murder all upon the green on the night of June 28th who would not "turn it up." They formed themselves, after being well primed with beer, into lines like soldiers, and on they went to do their murderous, Satanic work, calling out, "Blood or money!" While they were carrying out their murderous designs, Captain Slash would frequently cry out, "Now, my lads, form yourselves into line soldier-like. Blood or money is what we want and what we shall have." Many of those who had retired for the night under canvas, or under their stalls, were beaten, kicked, and not a few were rendered insensible. There were no policemen in those days, and it was fortunate that a body of shoemakers from Moulton were close at hand, or there would have been a larger number of the hawkers and stall-keepers murdered, there is no doubt. The Moulton shoemakers gave Slash and his gang what they did not expect. Daybreak showed what a murderous night had been spent upon the green. Blood, bludgeons, sticks, broken glass,

tables, stools, were to be seen lying in all directions. The money taken at the fair was hid in all sorts of ways. The wife of a publican ran with her money all the way to Northampton in her night-dress. A hawker of scythe-stones and whetstones told me that he helped his father to put the money they had taken during the fair under their cart-wheels. Others dug holes into the turf with their knives; others hid their money in the hedge-bottom. Scores were scampering about in their night-dresses in all directions, with their hair on end, and almost frightened out of their senses, like stark mad folks. The children nestling for the night under the carts, tents, and in the booths, screeched and screamed about in the dark upon the grass half naked, like a lot of young rabbits when the weasels have been at their heels, horrible enough to frighten devils wild. The few old folks visiting the fair every year who can remember the sad scene talk of it at the present time with almost breathless silence. Some of them said to me, "If we were to live a thousand years we should never forget it." Captain Slash was taken the next day to Northampton, and in the end he was hung upon the new drop. Accounts differ as to how he met his end. Some say that he died in sorrow and penitence. One gentleman named F—— told me that he was not far from him when he was hanged, and walked close beside him on his way to the gallows. While jogging along on the top of a cart Slash seemed quite jovial, and as merry as if going to a wedding. He remarked that his mother had said to him more than once that "he would die with his boots on," but he would make her a liar for once; and just before the fatal bolt was drawn he kicked his boots off among the crowd, and one of them hit a woman who stood next to my friend in the face and disfigured it. After this startling scene his nerves gave way, and he dropped tremblingly into eternity. To-day the skeleton

of Captain Slash is to be seen in an asylum at Northampton as a warning to all wrong-doers. One or two of his gang were transported, some cleared out of the country, and the others got off "scot-free."

The associations of bygone days of Boughton Green being disposed of, I now began to ramble among the gipsies and others upon the green. I had not gone far before I saw at the back of one of the vans a dirty, greasy-looking tramp of a fellow, with an apron on that might have been washed in boiling tallow and dried in smoke. In a large kettle before him there was a quantity of thick yellow stuff—what it was composed of, or how and by what means it was coloured, I could not tell—and by his side, in an old basket, there were pieces of almost rotten fish casting forth a sickly odour; and over a fire upon the ground there was an old frying-pan partly full of hot grease. I was puzzled to know what this was for, and what it all meant. I had not been puzzling long before I saw the greasy tramp taking pieces of the fish out of his basket and dip them into the thick yellow liquid; he then threw them into the pan upon the fire, whereupon a crackling noise commenced. After turning and twisting the pieces of fish about in the pan for some time, sometimes with his fingers and at other times with a stick, they were "browned" in order to be palatable to "greenhorns;" and as they were "cooked" he took them out of the pan and put them into a basket, and sallied forth among the throng and crush of "Johnnies," calling out "Fine fish, fried and all hot! Fried fish, all hot." A crowd soon gathered round him, and with a plentiful supply of pepper and vinegar he began business in earnest. Well-dressed farmers, shoemakers, men, youths, girls, and maidens of almost every grade clustered round him, and the eagerness with which they clutched and enjoyed the fried fish, bones, and vinegar

would have formed a subject worthy of my friend Herbert Johnson, or W. H. Overend, the artists of the "Graphic" and "Illustrated London News." "Smack" went their lips, and I turned away disgusted at the thought and sight at having found so many simple, gullible beings in the world, standing ready with open mouths to swallow the greasy morsels of dirty tramps. It is pleasing to note that all those who live by frying fish, and also those who live by eating it, are not of this stamp.

After strolling about for some time I turned among some of my old friends, Jack, Jim, Bill, Sal, Righteous, Piety, and Zachriali, gipsies of the cocoa-nut tribes engaged at cocoa-nut shying. All did not profess to be so low down in the social scale as the gipsies. Poor "Pea-soup Sal," with a reddish face, who had imbibed a little too much from the beer barrel, and whose legs were not over-strong, particularly objected to being classed with the gipsies; in fact, as she propped herself up by the side of her box of cocoa-nut balls, she turned up her nose, curled her lip, and staggered at the idea of such "respectable people as they wer-wer-wer-were being rec-rec-rec-reckoned with the gip-gip-gip-gipsies. They are a ba-ba-ba-ba-bad lot." Poor Sal was now overcome, and fell to the ground. For once in her life she was at any rate level with those gipsies who were squatting upon the floor. Her husband, who seemed to be a common-sense sort of a man, and apparently fairly educated, came to her relief. If he had not done so, I would not have given much for the cocoa-nuts, and less still for poor unfortunate Sal.

At times, when business was slack, I entered lengthily into conversation with him as to what had been the cause of his getting into such a degrading position.

I learned from him that both he and his wife had received a good education. The man by trade was a carpenter, and the woman a dressmaker; but in an evil

hour, instead of trusting to their own abilities, work, and common sense, they had taken the wrong turning, and from that time to the present they had been going down hill, and they could not tell how. All they seemed to realize was that they thought they were nearly at the bottom. Both have relations well off in the world; and both have the respect for their family not to disgrace it by vaunting their condition before the world, and making it known to their friends—only to a privileged *few*—the disgraceful social condition to which they had brought themselves. It is something heartrending, past description, to see a good tradesman and his dressmaking wife fooling their time away in idleness, wickedness, and sin, tramping the country, gambling with cocoa-nuts, living in vans, eating garbage, and trafficking in poor worn-out old horses and donkeys.

I found in further conversation with this unfortunate couple that gipsies have invented fresh machinations to kill farmers' pigs, viz., to take the inside of an apple out and fill it with mustard; and as the women or children are going up to the farm-houses some of the apples stuffed with mustard are thrown among the pigs—pigs are fond of apples—and the consequence is the large quantity of mustard in the apple suffocates the pigs, and nobody, except the gipsies, know how it has been done. Some other members of the gang will visit the farm-house during the next day or two, under the pretext of buying up old dead carcases, out of which to render all the fat to make cart grease. The farmer replies, "Oh yes, we had a pig,"—or a cow, as the case may be—"died yesterday. You can have that for five shillings if you like to dig it. You will find it in the meadow next to the piggery." "All right, guvernor, here's the money." Of course the gipsies fetch it, and it forms a relish for them for a long time. I have known of cases where the pig has been

buried for five days, being unearthed, and turned into food for the big and little gipsies.

Mr. T—— also told me how cows, calves, and bullocks are treated by the gipsies—the consequence is they are found dead the next morning in the fields—viz., two or three of the men will take a handful of hay and a rope, and when they have caught the cow, they will make it secure, and then the hay is forced into its throat, and a rope tied and twisted tightly round its mouth. When suffocation has completed its work, the hay is drawn out of its throat, and the nostrils are wiped clean. The gipsies then set off to their camp again. In a couple of days or so, according to a pre-arranged plan, some of the gang call upon the farmers to buy any dead cattle or pigs they may have to sell, and the result is, as in the case of the pigs suffocated with the mustard in the apples, the cow, calf, or bullock is taken to their tents or vans, perhaps a few miles away, and divided among the gipsies.

Some of the gipsies get a living by selling cart grease, which they say is pure fat, but which in reality is made up principally of potatoes, yellow turnips, and grease.

The gipsies have found out that "shot" is not so good to cure a broken-winded horse for one day only, as butter or lard—butter is preferable. The way they do it is to let the horse fast overnight, and then early next morning force a pound of butter down its throat. To cure a "roarer" a pint of oil is given overnight upon an empty stomach.

The earnings of cocoa-nut gamblers and others of the same class vary very much. Mr. T—— told me that he and his wife went upon Northampton racecourse last races with only five shillings in their pockets, with which they bought some acids, juices, and scents; these, with plenty of water, they turned into "pine-apple champagne," and

the result was they made five pounds profit, and plenty to eat and drink, with a "jollification" into the bargain, the whole of which was spent in a fortnight, and they had to commence again, sadder but no wiser.

It is an error to say that gipsies do not rob each other; some of them have told me that they have been robbed fearfully by other gipsies, sometimes of as many as a hundred cocoa-nuts at a time.

While our conversation was going on some silly beings were knocking their heads against a boss, for which honour they paid their pennies. What a satire upon the fair, I thought. Thousands were running their heads against bosses more deadly in effect than the spring bosses at which they ran like fighting rams. I was not much afraid of the heads of the bossers giving way, my only fear was for their necks.

Behind me there was to be seen another crowd shooting at glass bottles in the air. These might be said to be "windy customers," and as a rule they were full of "gas," bombast, thin and showy; while those who faced the "boss" were thick-necked, with plenty of animalism about them, and ready for a row.

I did not see many gaudily and showily dressed gipsy girls at the fair, but I saw a large number of gipsy girls dressed as "farming girls," "farmers' daughters," and servants, at work among the easy-going chaps. Some of the girls—or, I should say, women—held the hands of the "silly" in their hands, and they were pleasantly looking at the lucky lines with one eye, and bewitchingly into their faces with the other, while they told the geese their fortunes, and the pleasures and troubles they would have on account of "dark ladies" and "fair ladies," against whom they were to be on their guard, or they would not marry the one they loved. In some cases "dark gentlemen" were trying to steal the affections of their young lady. As a rule

gipsies prognosticate evil from "fair ladies" or "fair gentlemen." Of course it would not do to be too heavy upon the "dark gentlemen" or "dark ladies." A number of "shoe girls" were having their fortunes told also.

One of the gipsies had offended a man close to me from some cause or other, which had the effect of exasperating the "beery" man to such an extent that he bawled out, "You might rake hell out and scratch among the cinders, and you would not find a worse lot than gipsies." "Hold, hold," I said; "many of them are bad, at the same time you will find some good-hearted folks among them, a few of whom I know." I now turned and had a long conversation with a gipsy from Kent, and the good woman with her husband both fell in with my idea of getting the gipsy children educated by means of a free pass book, and of having their vans registered. Although busy with the evening meal, it did not prevent her entering heartily and pleasantly into my plans for effecting an improvement in the condition of the gipsies and their children, and more than once, surrounded as she was with everything the opposite of heavenly, said, "Thank you, sir, thank you, sir; and may God bless you for your efforts to improve the gipsies." I told her that all the gipsies were not so kindly disposed as to wish me success. "Never mind them, sir; all the right-thinking gipsies will say so." "You have spoken the truth," I said; "before you can apply a remedy to a festering sore the proper thing to do is to probe it to the bottom, and this I have been trying for a long time to do." It is a thousand times better to get at the root of a sore than to plaster it over by misleading fiction and romance, as some masculine writers, fascinated by the artificial charms of gipsy beauties—so called—have been doing. In this late day such efforts to hoodwink thoughtful, loyal, and observing men, and others who have the welfare of the nation at heart, may well be compared to a man

sticking a beautiful French butterfly upon a dead ox, and then going among a crowd of bystanders with a glib tongue, and cap in hand, trying to make them believe that the rotten dead ox was a mass of beautiful butterflies, which only required a shower of coppers and praises to cause them to fly.

No wonder at stable-boys and quacks, the sons of ministers, and others, becoming bewitched to the extent of having to face the frowns of friends on account of their gipsy-poaching proclivities.

My process may have been sharp and painful, and probably it is so now, but it will be found effective, enduring, and pleasing in the end. To deal with the evils of gipsying in a manner to excite the worst side of human nature may be pleasing for the present, but it will bring remorse and rottenness which no amount of misleading romance and pleasingly painted sin will be able to cover.

During the day I was informed by the gipsies that one young farmer had spent fifteen shillings in bowling for cocoa-nuts, and a youth not more than fourteen years old had spent five shillings similarly; this being so, it is not to be wondered at that our present-day gipsies should be on the increase at the rate they are. With fair weather, nuts cheap, cricketers out of the way, and "plenty of young uns," it is a "roaring trade."

When questioning one gipsy woman as to how many of the gipsies upon the ground could read and write—I roughly calculated the number of gipsies to be over a hundred men and women, and a hundred and fifty children—she answered me as follows: "Lord bless you, my dear good gentleman, I do not know more than three upon the green who can read and write. It would be a blessed thing if they could; but that will never be, as nobody takes any interest in us gipsies."

It was tearfully sorrowful to see over a hundred and

fifty children squatting about in bogs, dirt, filth, excitement, iniquity, and double-dyeing sin, groping their way to wretchedness and misery, without any hand being put out to save them.

So far as I could gather, not half a dozen of these gangs of un-English, lawless tramps and travellers had ever been in either day or Sunday school. And our civilizing "State" has not taken any steps for bringing the gipsy and other travelling children under school influence.

"Now, my lads, bowl away! All bad nuts returned; bowl away! Try your luck now, my young gentlemen; try your luck; bowl away!" Bang went a cocoa-nut off one of the stilts, flying in all directions, with the oil scattered to the winds. One thing has often surprised me, that the gipsies have not had frequently to carry cracked skulls, for some of the roguish "farmer chaps" seem to delight more in bowling at the gipsies' heads than the cocoa-nuts at their feet. It is their quick-sightedness and dexterous movements that save them. No drone would do to be at the back of the "pegs," or he would have to look out for his "pins."

A little farther ahead there was a family of gipsies of the name of Smith, man, wife, and seven children, squatting upon the ground to take their evening meal. As soon as they saw me they heartily invited me to join them. Gipsies never invite any one to partake of a meal with them unless with the whole heart. They never ask you with their mouths to join them and in their hearts hope you will not. This is one of the favourable traits in their character. For a man they love they would rob a hen-roost to fill his belly, and they would spit in the face of the man they hate. When you are eating with them, or, in fact, doing anything with them, you must be as one of them, or you will have to look out for "squalls." They can bear and respect the man or woman who, as a friend, speaks openly

and plainly to them, but they will be down upon the man "like a load of bricks" who tries by cunning and craft to get "the best side of them."

At the first interview they suspect that every stranger has some design upon them, and, as a consequence of ignorance and suspicion, they appear to be sullen and reserved. This feature of gipsy life wears off as they find out that you are a friend to them.

I accepted their invitation to tea in the midst of cocoa-nut establishments, steam horses, screeching of the whistles, horrifying music of a "hurdy-gurdy" organ, swing boats, and the screams of giddy girls and larking chaps, trotting donkeys, the galloping of "roaring horses and broken-winded ponies," whose riders were half drunk and mad with rage, beating, kicking, slashing, swearing, and banging, till both the poor animals and their riders foamed at their mouths like mad dogs.

The old china was fetched up for me, which, Mrs. Smith said, was over a hundred years old. A good cup of tea was poured out, the thin bread and butter cut and laid upon a clean cloth, and I was just about to sit upon an old piece of dirty flannel that lay upon the grass—for the grass was at this time getting a little damp—when the good woman cried out, loud enough to shake one's nerves, "My dear good gentleman, you must not sit down upon that." "No, no," Smith, the ungracious-nosed gipsy cried out in a voice as loud as his wife's. "If you do you'll get more than you bargained for. It's all alive, don't you see it?" Mrs. Smith saw that I was anxious to change quarters to the other side of the tent, and apologized for the filthy rag being there, by saying that "one of the children from one of the other vans had brought it, and had not taken it back again." We were now seated, and I was enjoying my tea as well as I could —they said that "they hoped that I should look upon the

tea as a fairing," and as such I looked upon it and enjoyed it, for I was both hungry and thirsty—when a Northampton baker appeared upon the scene vending his bread. A little pleasantry was exchanged between the bread-seller, the gipsies, and myself about the size of the loaves, the dearness of the bread, and what was put into the flour before baking to make the loaves white, large, and showy. The conversation turned upon potatoes and alum, and the gipsy Smith discussed the quantity of potato and alum there was in the bread the baker had sold to them. This nettled the baker, and he said, "Bread mixed with potatoes and alum was good enough for pigs, but it——" The gipsy would not let him finish his sentence, but instantly sprang to his feet, and ran at the baker, and struck him on the breast with his tightened fist, calling out, "Do you mean to say that bread mixed with potatoes is good enough for pigs, and do you call us pigs? You reckon us as pigs, do you? You shall remember this or I am not Righteous Gipsy Smith." And just as he was running at the half-frightened baker again Mrs. Smith stepped between them. An altercation took place, one of the most disgusting and sickening I ever knew. The baker's wife now came up, and for a few minutes there was such a storm over the pot as I had never seen in my life. It bid fair to become a general *melée*. I was called in to decide who was in the wrong. This was no little difficulty, as the gipsy was excited by beer, and the baker by rage and fear. The end of it was I calmed them both down. The baker and his wife sped their way to Northampton, and the gipsy to the back of his van, to vent his bile and calm his passion, after which we sat down to finish our tea. This being over, and calm, peace, and quietness reigning, I gave the children some coppers and shook hands warmly with the gipsies, and thanked them, and then turned to another phase of gipsy life.

I began to think that it was quite time to look after my lodging for the night, and wended my way to Boughton village, some half-mile or more away. This was a work of no light undertaking. I first tried to find a clean bed in a quiet cottage, which, after tramping about from house to house, knocking, inquiring, had to be given up as impossible. The poor folks eyed me over from head to foot with wondering curiosity. They seemed to be puzzled as to my movements, and as to whether they should reckon me as a gentleman, or a bailiff, who had secreted in my pockets either a county-court summons or an execution. I next tried the "publicans and sinners." At first they hesitated about giving me an answer; especially the innkeeper at the "Griffin." They seemed to wonder whether I was or was not a parson, spying out the land. The landlady at the "Red Lion" was holding out encouragement, until the landlord, who might be made of vinegar and crabs, appeared upon the scene, calling out gruffly, "No, we can't do wi anybodys;" and out I went, expecting to have a stone for my pillow under some wall or hedge-bottom upon the green. Fortunately I called at a cottage on the roadside, about a hundred and fifty yards from the green, to see if they could oblige me with a bed. After a minute's hesitation, the good woman, who seemed to have a large heart and a good-natured face, said, "Yes, you look to be a gentleman, and we will try to accommodate you. Come in and make yourself at home. Will you have some tea?"

After a rest for a few minutes, and as the shades of evening were gathering round, I strolled upon the "green" and found Bacchus was on his throne with Atè, Discordia, Momus, and Mars as his attendants. Concordia, Harpocrates, and Pudicitia had not been upon the "green," or, if so, they had been only for a very short time. Broken glasses, empty beer barrels, corks, pieces

of paper, and stools upside down were to be seen on every hand. The perfume of burning paraffin, aroma of the beer barrel, and stench of the brandy bottle met me at every turn as I wended my way among the wicked, silly, larking, and foolish. Here and there could be seen girls scarcely in their teens, with the arms of half-drunk "chaps" round their waists—upon the table before them were "jugs of beer"—and opening their mouths wide as if they would be delighted at any one looking down their throats as they bawled out most disgusting songs. In one of the booths between forty and fifty boys and girls were larking together in a manner that made one shudder to think of the results. Some of them were threatening vengeance to their "Bills," "Jacks," or "Toms," if they said a word to them when they got home.

One of the women struck up, as if she was determined to contribute her share to the debauch, in squeaking tones resembling that of a cracked tin whistle—

"We won't go home till morning,
Till daylight does appear."

A little ahead a rustle, commotion, and hubbub was going on; of course I must join in the crush. I could not get very near. When I inquired what was the matter, I was coolly told that "it was only a man and woman fight." Thanks to the excellent body of policemen at hand, it was soon stopped. Another "turn" in the distance was taking place. A gipsy—a big, cowardly, hulking fellow—and an Englishman had long had a grudge against each other. The Englishman could not get the cowardly gipsy to "fight it out." At last the Englishman offered the gipsy half a crown and a gallon of beer to let him have one "round" with him. The gipsy consented to this condition. The money was paid and the beer drunk, after which the gipsy wanted to back out of the bargain. Before the big gipsy would at the last minute undertake

to fight the little Englishman, the gipsy stipulated that there was to be "no hitting upon the noses." The Englishman did not like this shuffling, but he agreed to it, and they stripped for the encounter. For a few minutes they sparred about until the gipsy saw his opportunity to hit the Englishman full tilt upon his nose, which he did with a tremendous force sufficient to break it. When the gipsy was asked why he did it, he said, "I could not help it, my hand slipped." A little farther on still, I came upon a policeman rolling an empty beer barrel from the policemen's tent towards the beer stores.

During the day I did not observe one "blue ribbon" policeman upon the grounds—nor, in fact, did I see one upon the course. No doubt there were many good and true men and women upon the "green" who had gone there purposely to sell their wares. Would to God that there had been more of them, and then there would have been less rows, and less cause for such a body of policemen. The pure gipsy rows—*i.e.*, a number of gipsies joining in a general *melée* of an "up-and-down fight," paying off old scores—were less this year than they have been known for a long time. Several times a row was imminent, but with a little tact and the common sense of the women—aye, and of the men too—it was averted. I observed a little more sulkiness than usual on the part of a few of the gipsies, but with a little pleasantry this passed off.

I retired from the hubbub for a few minutes, to stand against one of the huge trees growing upon the edge of the "green," and while there I heard some gipsies chuckling over the "gingered" and "screwed" horses and ponies they had sold during the fair, and arranging which of their party should hunt the customer out the next day, to buy back for a five-pound note their palmed-off "broken-winded" and "roaring old screws" which they

had sold for seventeen pound or twenty pound during the fair. A fine-looking broken-winded horse, "roarer" or "cribber," with the mark intact, is almost a fortune for a gipsy. During two or three years "while he will go," the "screw" is sold and bought in again scores of times. Many of the horse-dealing gipsies are dressed nowadays as farmers, and by these means they more readily palm off their "screws" upon young beginning town or street hawkers, carriers, and higglers.

Living in some of the vans of gipsies there were man, woman, and, in some instances, seven or eight sons and daughters of all ages. In other vans and tents there was a mixture of men, women, and children, not of the same blood relationship; and the same may be said of some of the travelling gingerbread hawkers.

Those of the hawkers who were rich enough to own a van slept in it "higgledy-piggledy," "pell-mell," and "all of a heap." Those who had not vans, the men, women, and "chaps" slept upon the ground, under the stall boards, in a manner which would be a disgrace to South African civilization and Zulu morals.

In the midst of waning twilight and the gathering of sheets and rents, some of the gipsy women were preparing for their last meal before shutting the van doors and drawing to their tent curtains. Scores of poor little lost, dirty, ignorant, neglected, and almost naked, gipsy children gathered round me for "coppers" and "sweets." After digging deep into my pocket for all I could find, and distributing them among the children, I bade the gipsy parents "good-night" and a "good-bye," and then turned to have a chat and a "good-night" with George Bagworth, the steam-horse driver, and his wife, the "popgun" firer. George was dressed in his best large Scotch plaid suit from head to foot. His "hurdy-gurdy steam organ," and "flying horses," had winged

married and single, men, women, and children, round and round, exhibiting their thick and thin legs, not modestly for the riders, but successfully for George and his sharp, good-looking, business wife. George was in good humour with himself and everybody else. He entered freely into conversation about his troubles and trials in former years, and of his successes, position, and future views.

He is very good to poor cocoa-nut gamblers. It often happens that some of the poor unfortunate fraternity arrive upon the "course," "green," or "fair" without a "tanner." A wink of his wife's eye prompts George to advance them sufficient money to give them a start. This—for there is honour among thieves—is paid back at the close of the fair, with many thanks. George pointed out to me again with pride the vans he had made, and with little greater pride to his artistic painting of the heathen gods and goddesses, which were the mainstays of his whirligig establishment.

George's wife hung down her head at the non-success of her "popgun" galleries. "But it is no use 'frettin' and cryin' over spilt milk,'" she said, while preparing their supper tea. "You'll join us, won't you, sir? you shall be made right welcome, and have the best we've got." They fetched out their best antique china cup and saucer, and we three sat down to a box table with cloth cover to enjoy the twilight meal, with the twinkling stars overhead, and the gipsies' lurcher dogs prowling about the tents and vans, snuffling and smelling after the odds and ends and other trifles. Speaking within compass, I should think there would not be fewer than thirty lurchers skulking under the stalls as eagerly as if after hares and rabbits. Of course George Bagworth's joined in the scent and sniffle. "Mine host" was a poacher bred and born—at least he had a spell of it in his younger days

among the woods, parks, spinnies, and plantations joining Leicestershire and Staffordshire coalfields. The twinkling star repast was finished; hubbub, din, screeching, yelling, fighting, singing, shouting, swearing, blaspheming, and loud oaths were dying out. Pluto seemed to be getting tired of his feast; Somnus was observed stealthily wending his way among Bacchus's wounded followers, and the vast herds and tribes of poor, neglected, uneducated, and lost little children living in sin, pestilential, and vitiated atmosphere with dark—very dark—and black future before them, which the rising of a morning's sun could not dispel.

As I wended my way to my lodgings I could not help thinking of Sennacherib's army besieging Jerusalem with no Hezekiah to deliver.

I had now found my way to my lodgings. Round the family table in the cottage there were Mr. and Mrs. Gayton, "mine host and hostess," and one or two friends. While the conversation was going on a party of drunken fellows were bawling out down the road some kind of song, which I could not comprehend. Mr. Gayton's sister said it was a song she knew well; and with a little persuasion—notwithstanding Mrs. Gayton's twitching, nervous manner and disinclination to hear it—the good woman struck up in a sweet but rather shrill voice, and in somewhat affecting tremulous tone, the song, as follows:

"Little empty cradle, treasured so with care,
Tho' thy precious burden now has fled,
How we miss the locks of curly golden hair,
Peeping from the tiny snow-white bed.
When the dimpled cheeks and pretty laughing eyes,
From the rumpled pillows shone,
Then I gazed with gladness, now I looked with sighs,
Empty is the cradle—baby's gone.

"Baby left her cradle for the golden shore,
O'er the silvery waters she has flown,
Gone to join the angels, peaceful evermore,
Empty is the cradle—baby's gone."

After the first verse was ended I noticed again a little subdued and stifled sobbing, and the mistress of the house wiping her eyes with the corner of her apron.

I could see that there was some cause for the tear-fetching tenderness and sympathy that was manifested, and I gently asked for information, and was told by the good people that during the last month two of the youngest babies had been sent for to live in the angel-world where no tears are seen and sighing heard. A melting, sorrowful sadness seemed to creep over me as I looked round the room. A parent cannot describe the feelings, and no one but a parent can feel them.

The cradle was empty in the corner; the lovely little birds had flown to sing in a lovelier clime. The tender-hearted mother gave way to a woman's dewy feelings while another verse was sung, in which I could not help joining, owing to having passed through similar circumstances. I had lost more than one little tender lamb, and could enter feelingly into the motherly woman's misfortunes. I said the children were not lost but gone before, where there are neither tears nor the pinchings of poverty. In the midst of the solemn scene I wended my way upstairs to my humble cot; my softened feelings, wet eyes, and scalding tears prevented me worshipping Morpheus till just as the candle was flickering out in the socket.

I then dropped into a dozing sleep to awake at opening day, after which I bade my friends the gipsies good-bye, and left "the mother bending o'er her beauty buds."

Rambles among the Gipsies at St. Giles' Fair, Oxford.

ON Saturday, September 4th, 1882, I found myself travelling southward by the aid of a carrier's waggon and first, second, and third class railway carriages, surrounded by gentlemen, clergymen, tradesmen, farmers, cattle-dealers, labourers, soldiers, snobs, fops, and scamps, and ladies fat and thin, pretty, plain, reserved, lovable, and smiling; and as we neared London the sleeping, yawning, gaping, and slow movements seemed to be giving way to activity, bustle, restlessness, and anxious looks. Stopping, banging, and dashing, and on we sped. In the train I had a pleasant chat with the Rev. Mr. Gibbotson, vicar of Braunston, who related to me some of his experiences with canal-boat children and the gipsies. In one instance a gipsy charged him three shillings and sixpence for grinding his nail scissors; and in another instance a sharp, clever boat boy of twelve had passed the sixth standard, and was in a fair way of becoming a pupil teacher, but in six months spent among the canal children in floating up and down the country, he had learnt some of their wicked and bad habits, which had ruined his career.



"ON THE ROAD" TO OXFORD FAIR.—*To face page* 123.

After changing carriages, I saw at one of the North London stations a woman, who must have imagined that she was in the country, creeping out of one of the compartments with her sweet-looking child of some four or five summers at snail speed, and as if changing would have done to-morrow. She quietly found her way to the carriage door and opened it very gently, and was about to step leisurely upon the platform when the train began to move off. Her eyes were now opened, and with a wild stare she tumbled the child upon the platform, and then in getting out herself she fell upon the footboard. Fortunately for herself and the child, the guard was close by at the time, and with the quickness of lightning he seized the child with one hand and its mother with the other and pulled them upon the platform, the child upon its face and the mother upon her back, and saved their lives in less time than I could twinkle my eye. The child cried, the mother screamed, and the last I saw of them, as we were rounding the curve, was that a porter was picking up the child, and the bewildered mother was gathering herself together as well as she could.

On my way I called at a large block of new mansions in course of erection, and which my son had in hand, and found a joke very nearly carried into tragical and awful effect. The "lift" was not working well, and a gentleman not of a classical or ministerial kind, rather than use his legs in going up the ordinary stairs, preferred using the temporary goods hoist, and said to one of the men as he was jumping into the cage against the wish of friends, "Jump in, and if we must go to hell, we may as well go together." They had no sooner landed at the top of the building and just cleared the cage, than it dropped to the bottom of the building with terrific force, carrying destruction with it. One minute longer and they would both have been in eternity.

Having fairly landed in London, I made my way to the Religious Tract Society, and the Wesleyan Sunday-school Union, for some pictures, and books, and magazines for the gipsy children, which were gladly given to me, and with my bundles, bags, &c., I turned into my lodging in Museum Street well tired. Overnight I inquired of my host if I could get a 'bus or a cab that would take me to Paddington by nine o'clock on Sunday morning. At this question he shook his head and said, "The 'busses will not be running so early as eight o'clock, and the cabs, what few you will meet, will be on their way home; therefore you will have a difficulty in getting your packages to the station. And if you order one overnight it is ten to one if they will come." From this answer I could see that my only course was to be up early enough to lug them to the station myself. Six o'clock on Sunday morning found me getting a cup of cold tea and a sandwich for my breakfast, after which I started down Oxford Street with my four parcels, weighing about three-quarters of a hundredweight. No 'busses were to be seen. Here and there were tired, straggling cabmen wending their way home. As I hailed them they shook their heads and on they went. I managed to carry my load about two hundred yards, and then turned off the street to rest, and to leave the few stragglers moving about Oxford Street wondering as to my movements. Not far from Tottenham Court Road I turned off the main street a few yards, and stood with my back to the solitary passers-by, putting a few notes into my pocket-book, when I was startled and somewhat surprised to find two tall young men at my elbow, and without a word one of them deposited upon the Religious Tract Society's parcel a small book, entitled "A Cure for the Incurable," which I picked up and read as follows:

"During the journey we were joined by a young man

and woman, the latter evidently labouring under some distressing bodily infirmity. The young man took advantage of the vacated seats to place his afflicted companion in a recumbent position, carefully covering her feet with a shawl. I gently alluded to her appearing unwell. 'Yes, ma'am,' she replied, 'I am just dismissed from St. Thomas's Hospital as *incurable*.' The tone of her voice, and the tear which trickled down her pale cheek, instantly awakened my sympathy. Her four children, one a baby, and her dear husband, she said, made it 'hard to die;' but she believed God would care for the motherless ones, and cheer the lonely widower. 'The doctors,' she added, 'say I may live some months, but that cure is impossible. So I thought I would rather be in my own cottage, where I could look at my children, and see the flowers outside my door, and have fresh air, than remain in the hospital; though I had everything of the best there, and great kindness shown me. But, ma'am, home is home; and my husband knows how to nurse me better than any one else. I know that I shall not live long; but I shall die at home, and God will comfort my dear husband, and will go through the dark valley with me.' This brief interview was deeply touching to me, and my tears flowed with theirs."

Just as I had finished the hasty glance through the little book, and was preparing for another "move on," I noticed a tall, emaciated, half-clad young woman approaching me from the opposite side of the street. Such a picture of misery I have rarely seen. She did not seem to have more than one loosely-hung old garment upon her, which, as she walked, revealed the shape of her figure, which did not at all seem a bad one; moral deformities had not as yet, to all appearance, begun to tell heavily upon her frame. On presenting herself to me she said, in tones of despair, "Will you please give me sufficient to buy me a cup of

coffee? I want it very bad, I can assure you, sir. Do, dear sir." Her eyes were red either with drink, tears, or anguish. Poor lost soul! thought I; and on she went to ruin and death.

I started again, and had got nearly to Oxford Circus, and deposited my parcels upon the pavement, and was surveying things over in my mind, when I heard something chirping over my head. I could not tell where the sound came from. It was not crying, nor was it either singing or moaning. My curiosity was set at rest as I lifted up my head to look above. To my surprise, a young woman with lovely face, and head studded with "curling bobs," was peeping out of one of the top bedroom windows and delightfully engaged in throwing kisses at somebody across the street. "Chirp," "chirp," "chirp," owing to the stillness of the morning, sounded as distinctly as if they were near to me; at any rate the kisses were not for me, and on I trudged. As I passed Holles Street, people, young and old, with books under their arms and in their hands, were going to early Sunday morning prayer-meetings, or other religious services. What a contrast to a gathering of half-drunken hulking youths and men tumbling and quarrelling about Gilbert Street, I thought. After receiving not a few insults, I moved forward by stages till I arrived at the Marble Arch, about eight o'clock, with my face covered with perspiration, and my hands, arms, and shoulders tingling and aching with a kind of deadness and shooting pains. Scavenger carts were moving to and fro, carrying the filth and off-scouring of all nations. A coffee stall seemed to have been doing a good business, if the pell-mell gathering, sauntering array might be taken as a specimen of the quantity and quality of the coffee drinkers, who might be called the loitering customers of the "pub" in search of more substantial beverage than gin and beer. Near Southwick Crescent and Oxford Square I passed

another coffee stall, more respectable in appearance than the one at Marble Arch, upon which was painted in large letters, "The Church of England Temperance Society." I now began to try to make a further move, when a cabman hailed in sight, who looked as if he were going on the stand instead of coming off it. A bargain was struck, and he bowled me off at a rattling pace to the Great Western station, where I arrived about twenty minutes past eight o'clock, stiff and tired about my legs and arms. In pacing backwards and forwards upon the platform, I nudged, accidentally, the elbow of a porter who was taking his "swig" at a passenger's whiskey bottle. Whether the neck of the bottle tilted against his teeth, or some of its contents went down his bosom instead of his throat, I could not tell. He did not say much about the accident, but his looks were "awful," and my begging pardon could not turn them into a smile. Another porter said, "They could do without Sunday travelling if it were not for the London beer-drinkers. Shut up beershops and you will gag Sunday trains."

Some thirty or forty city fishermen, with their rods and tins, were moving backwards and forwards waiting for the train; they were evidently going out for a spree. One round jolly-faced, good-looking porter said to me, "They are going out a-fishing, but it's not many fish they catch. They catch something they don't expect sometimes. They are not all fish that comes to their lines. Many of the city fishermen gets a line and a tin, and goes into the country and calls themselves travellers, and turns into the first 'pub' they come to and then they booze all God's day away, and keep us poor chaps at work all Sunday instead of going to church or chapel. Sunday travelling ought to be done away with; at any rate there ought only to be two trains a day each way, out and into London." A porter then cried out, "Take your places for Slough, Reading, and Oxford."

I obeyed his call, and found myself sitting opposite an old friend, Mr. J. Seaman, from the *Weekly Times*. In the train the brandy bottle was pulled out by a man whose nose apparently had been too prominent upon his pugilistic-looking face at times for somebody's bruising machine; at any rate there was an indent in it upon which cock robin could have sat very comfortably for an hour piping forth the curses of drink and its consequences, and the blessing of God's Sabbath as a day of rest for man and beast.

In another corner was a young woman, dispensing liberally port wine to her new and old friends around her, bringing to the faces of some of them the alternate red blush and pale white, indicating that some monster was at work within them, telling them that it was wrong-doing. After a three hours' pleasant chat on this bright summer's morning, with my friend, I arrived at Oxford. After partaking of a cold lunch, I made my way with my arms full of pictures, books, and illustrated tracts, to the two hundred vans and covered carts outside Oxford, near Somers Town. By the time I had arrived the rain had begun to come down heavily. In wending my way among the nearly two-mile length of vans, shows, covered carts, and waggons, I found some old faces who gladly welcomed me. The road was little better than a puddle. Thousands of Oxonians were running to and fro, star-gazing, gossiping, laughing, shouting, and making fun on the roadside. With a vast number of them Sunday seemed as on other days. Little stalls of nuts, apples, plums, were on the footpaths. Notwithstanding the pouring rain, the poor little dirty gipsy children clustered round me in the vans and out of them for the pictures, books, &c. Poor lost souls! some of them, old and young, big and little, men and women, might not have been washed for months. Some of the "hobbledehoys, betwixt men and boys," of Oxford tried to make as big fools of themselves as they could, and kept shouting

out, "Now, governor, they will swallow your bag if you will give it 'em." Some of the town's children admired my pretty books, and closed upon me for some, which I am sorry to say I had to refuse, as they were for the big and little travellers. In the vans, &c., there would be an average of four children, two men, and two women, and out of this vast mass of travellers there would not be fifty who could read or write. "Of the persons," says the *Daily Telegraph*, "who were committed to prison last year, 60,840 could neither read nor write. Ignorance and crime go hand in hand together. This is a fact beyond disputation." In some of the vans I counted eight children, besides the men and women. In one van there was a man with a broken leg. In three other vans there were three men ill. Several of the women had bruises upon their faces, and two had black eyes, and the children were squatting about among the mud in the ditch.

"I was a taper smoking,
Lying by the footway,
Lease gleam of red away,
Smoke my thin flame choking."

Dr. Grosart, *Sunday at Home.*

Under the vans there were over a hundred lurcher dogs, ready for anything, including white-tailed rabbits, "shoshi," long-legged hares, "kanégro," and other trifles of this kind, down to a shin-bone of beef hanging loosely in a butcher's shop—aye, and a piece of a man's calf if he came too near to them and was not wanted. Gipsies' dogs are so highly trained that they understand a gipsy's looks; and I should not be surprised to hear that their dogs can "rocker" Romany. The dogs are perfectly masters of the art of killing hedgehogs, *hotchi-witchi*. Like their masters, they go stealthily to work and never "epen." Gipsy poachers have been known to clear a field of hares

and rabbits and "bag their game" while the keepers have been lying in wait for them over the fence.

Among the vans I came across, for the first time, a "George Smith" a gipsy. I have met with any number of "John Smiths," "Bill Smiths," "Rily Smiths," but never a "George Smith." This led me to have a long chat with him and his wife. They are Oxfordshire gipsies, and from what I learned afterwards they are "tidy sort of folks." I felt inclined to have a long conversation; in fact, I seemed to feel a greater interest in him on account of his being a "George Smith" gipsy. The good woman and her six children looked almost like pure gipsies, but such was not the fact. They could "rocker" a little only, and got a fair living by gambling in cocoa-nuts and horse-dealing. "George Smith" told me that he never went more than fifty miles from home, and when he bought and sold horses—of a third-rate kind—once he could do so the second time. All horse-dealing gipsies are not of this class. Gipsies often told me that they like to see fresh faces, fresh places, and fresh money. During my conversation with Mrs. Smith, she said formerly she liked hedgehogs; but since she had found out that "they liked beetles and snakes" her "stomach had turned against them." She went on to say, "I am no doctor, but I am told by those who know, that the yellow fat inside a hedgehog, which you know, sir, is from the poison of snakes and adders; hedgehogs are dead on snakes and adders. Immediately a snake sees a hedgehog it kicks up a terrible row, and tries to scamper off as fast as it can. No more hedgehogs for me while I live; and I am sure our George will not have any." Not one of this family of Smiths could tell a letter, although they sometimes sent their children to school a short time in the winter; but, as the good woman said, "Lord bless you, my dear gentleman, what bit they

learn in the winter is gone again in the summer, and they are no better for it." I told them my plan for meeting their case, viz., by the registration of their vans and a free education pass book for their children, with which they heartily agreed. I left them several pleasing children's pictures, cards, &c., with which they were highly delighted, and I then made my way to quell a gipsy row further on, which I found to be, as usual, over the most trivial things. While I was busy among the gipsies I saw two young ladies, I might almost say angels, from Oxford, disregarding the rain, talking and distributing tracts among them. The tracts were not exactly of the right kind; children's religious pictorial literature is what is the most pleasing, acceptable, and useful. Dry tracts are no better than waste paper; and it is almost a waste of time and money to distribute them. A little further on were three gentlemen from Oxford discoursing to a group of gipsy children, and no doubt they did some good; at least I hope so. If anything, their excellent well-meant remarks were not made sufficiently interesting, or brought down to the gipsy children and adults' capacities. A wild, dry anecdote, badly told, and without a pleasing and practical application, will not do much good at any time.

In addressing gipsies, and other people of this class, two things are needed to ensure success. There must either be the extreme earnestness or the extreme simplicity, and no man or woman can succeed in winning them over to virtuous paths unless these features are ever brought prominently out. They must either be as Paul preaching to the Athenians, or as Christ upon the Mount discoursing to the multitudes in deeply interesting parables, put with an irresistible force of love and simplicity; or as St. John the divine when surrounded by little children, preaching with but few words, but speaking

volumes of love in sympathetic looks, melting tears, and gentle touches, reaching tender and obdurate hearts in a Christ-like fashion, with a power that the devil himself could not withstand. Love, earnestness, and child-like simplicity brought to bear upon any gipsy children who are sharp and clever will produce surprising heavenly results—aye, and from the gipsy men and women too. In the gipsy mine there is room for all workers.

> "Working together in the sacred mine,
> We trace the veins of ore beneath our feet,
> Till riches unimaginable greet."
> RICHARD WILTON, M.A., *Sunday at Home*, No. 1268.

Instead of working—

> "Oft have we lingered in the TENT,
> The 'pearl' unbought,
> The book unread, the knee unbent
> The grace unsought.
> Oft have despondency and shame
> Our faith assailed,
> And when we would confess Thy name
> Our courage failed."
> CANON BATEMAN, *Sunday at Home*, No. 1267.

Among this mile and a half of gipsy vans there were some "nice and clean" travelling homes. In one I found a good woman reading to her children by the evening fire, and the kettle "singing on the hob." As I paddled and waddled over boot-tops in mud, in the midst of this vast concourse of people young and old, never in my life did I so fully realize the case of the poor man who had fallen among thieves, and the action of the priest and Levite, and also that of the Samaritan. The whole scene depicted in the good old book seemed to come before me as one vast panorama, exhibiting human life under a variety of aspects. On the one hand, drawn

along the side of the road in the ditch for more than a mile and a half, there were two hundred vans, carts, and tents, inhabited by a thousand gipsy men, women, and children of all ages, mostly in the deepest depths of wretchedness, ignorance, misery, and dirt—of many of whom it might be said that they were thieves among thieves—had been travelling all Saturday night or on Sunday morning to be at the fair in time for a good place. Gipsies, showpeople, and others of this wandering class travel chiefly on Sundays. Saturday nights and Monday nights are, as a rule, their best nights. Some of them had with their poor bony horses, from "shutting-up time" on Saturday night to Sunday afternoon, travelled over forty miles, and most wretched spectacles they were. On the other hand, and on the footpath, there were thousands of gentle and simple, rich and poor, young and old, saints and sinners, ministers and their flocks, moving to and fro, some of whom sneered at the gipsies, others mocked, laughed, and joked. Some were disgusted, and others looked pensive and sorrowful at the picture of an Oxford Lent carnival being spent in this way on a Christian Sabbath in the centre of Christendom and civilization, with its hundreds of Christian ministers within sight and call, who did not answer to the voice of love or duty. Well might Washbourne cry out—

> "Our hearts are broke, our harps unstringèd be,
> Our only musick's sighs and groans,
> Our songs are to the tune of *lachrymose*,
> We are fretted all to skin and bones.
>
> Dr. Grosart's "*Fuller Worthies*."

After I had distributed my books, and wended my way to the end of this long lane of sin and iniquity, I turned to look at the heartrending sight. There were hundreds of gipsy men and women, some few of whom had fallen from the paths of virtue, uprightness, and honesty, and some six hundred

to seven hundred poor gipsy children of all ages weltering in the ditch. Not twenty children out of this vast number had been taught at the knee of a kind, gentle, loving mother to lisp in tender, trembling simple tones, to which heaven and the whole angelic host stoop to listen with open ears, for fear one word might be lost—

"Lord Jesus teach a child to pray,
Who humbly kneels to Thee,
And every night and every day
My Friend and Saviour be.

"While here I live, give me Thy grace,
And when I'm called to die,
Oh, take my soul to see Thy face,
And sing Thy praise on high."

My heart was almost ready to break, and the big tear-drop forced its way down my face. Just as I was turning away with a sad and aching heart, a little sharp gipsy girl, dark-eyed, of ten summers, clutched hold of my hand and coat. She looked up into my face and said, "Eh, Mr. Smith, don't you know me? Don't you remember giving me a little book and a penny when I was very ill in our van upon the Leicester racecourse last year? Mother and doctor said I should die, but you see I'm not dead yet. My name is Smith. There are lots of gipsy Smiths." Before she had finished her interesting little story a large number of little gipsies had gathered round me, among whom I had to distribute, with care and tact, all the pictures and little books I had left. It was now dark. Fires in old gipsy tin buckets and on the wet ground were to be seen; sticks were crackling; lights shining under the vans and in the small windows and through the crevices and over the top half of their doors; their evening meals sent forth a variety of odours, ranging from snail soup to red herrings, dead pig, and hashed venison. The barking and growling of their lurcher dogs were heard more fre-

quently and savagely. The thousands of dripping star-gazers and sightseers, rough and smooth, drunk and sober, had begun to get pleasingly less; rain was coming down almost in torrents; nevertheless the children felt loath to leave me. To the onlookers I could have said, with George Herbert—

> "Rain, do not hurt my flowers, but gently spend
> Your lovely drops. Press not to smell them here;
> When they are ripe their odour will ascend,
> And at your lodging with their thanks appear."
>
> "*Fuller Worthies.*"

With many caresses, thanks, and good wishes from the children, I groped my way to my lodging with thankfulness, but in a wretched plight, suffering from my life-long enemy—giddiness. After five minutes' chat with my round-faced host I mounted, with a hot head, and cold wet feet, "wooden hills," and amongst the blankets and feathers I snoozed into a fitful sleep, to be startled by wild dreams and nocturnal noises. In one of my strange flights I found myself in a dark and dismal-looking place like a chimney-sweep's underground soot storehouse. How I got there was a mystery I have never been able to solve. The only things I remember in connection with my visit to this dark abode was, the good spirit led me through alleys, by colleges, churches, chapels, synagogues, and schools of every grade. Marks of civilization were everywhere visible on my path. There were ministers and teachers on every hand. One little narrow backway led me to a small narrow opening down some narrow, rugged steps. As soon as I entered, a small door of the colour of the walls instantly closed upon me as with a spring, and before I had time to look back at the way by which I entered, I was in worse than a Roman or gipsy maze. At first a cold, chilly sensation of fright and terror crept over me. My hair seemed to rear bolt upright in a twinkle;

but this soon passed away after realizing the fact that I was among friends. There were no windows except one dismal pane, through which the moonlight gleamed. There were no candles. The grate was made up of bricks and rusty crooked old bars of iron put loosely together without mortar. The fender was of two long shin-bones, and the ends of it two thigh-bones of a man. The fire was crackling with sticks and the bones of rabbits, partridges, pheasants, and fowls. Beetles, cockroaches, toads, and spiders were as thick as they could creep and stick. A dead pig's skin badly cured, with the bristles sticking on it in patches, was laid upon the broken stones on the floor as a hearth-rug. In a large pot over the fire there were boiling large pieces of diseased pork in a thickish liquid, which was stirred every few minutes by an old "hag" with a ham-bone. The uneven, broken walls of the room were covered with greasy grime and filth, upon which were hung pictures of skeletons, death, coffins, and cross-bones, and most horrible, murderous-looking men and women.

In the centre of this large, deathly room there was a kind of long, low, tumble-down table propped up with bricks, old tressels, and stones. The top was sickly, dirty, loose, and uneven. Round the room there were scores of men, women, and children, blackened with dirt, grease, and grime, who had never been washed since they were ushered into the world, sitting and squatting upon the floor. Their language was that of thieving, robbing, cheating, lying, &c.; and their spare time—at least some of them—while the cooking was going on, was passed with the devil's cards. For a few minutes all was as silent as death, and then the old "hag" placed upon the table the pot which had been hanging over the fire, after which she handed to each of us in the room an old broken mug, and told us to help ourselves to what was in the pot. At this

a general rush took place; swearing and fighting was about to begin in earnest, with the probability of it ending in murder without the outside world knowing of it. I was about to begin my sickening share when I said to the lot of them, "Now, chaps, women, and children, in my country it is usual for us to say "grace" before meat and thanks after it on occasions like this, and, if you don't mind, I'll follow out the practice now." Several of the poor little lost creatures cried out, "That's capital! if it's anything nice we shall like it. We've not had anything we like for a long time." I told them to be quiet, and then proceeded with, "Be pleased, O Lord, to grant us——" "Stop! stop!" cried out the old "hag." "What did you say? 'O Lord?' What do you mean? What is it? who is it? and where does He come from? We've never heard the name before." I said, "Let me finish, and then I will tell you afterwards." I began again to say grace, and proceeded as follows: "Be pleased, O Lord, to grant us Thy blessing with this food, for Jesus——" They now all jumped upon their feet, and an old, grey-headed man, the picture of a Cabul murderer, with Satan in his face and the devil in his eyes, along with the wretched, ragged, lost, and emaciated little creatures, cried out, "Who is Jesus? We have never heard of Him before. Does He live in a big house? and has He plenty of rabbits, hares, game, and fowls in His plantations? because we should like to know." I told them, in a way that excited their curiosity, as to who God was, and also as to who Jesus was. They set to their midnight supper like a lot of pigs. I took a little, but was far from enjoying it. When they had finished their supper they put their mugs upon the floor, and the bones they gave to a number of bony, hungry-looking dogs, a kind of cross between bulldogs, bloodhounds, and greyhounds, which were ready for any kind of work between the death of a keeper and a young

rabbit. They reminded me very much of the big, hungry wretch of a dog in Landseer's "Jack in Office"—

"His lean dog scanned him by the three-legged stool."

Harris.

The conversation after supper took place in a language which they thought I could not understand, as to what was to be done on the morrow. I was mute now for a time. The children were to look after and bring home all the eggs, chickens, and fowls they could lay their hands upon. The men were to bring in larger game; and the women were to hunt up the servant girls. Each one had their work allotted them. As a kind of relief, and in broken English, in which they thought I would gladly join them, a number of the elder ones related how many times they had been "nabbed" and sent to "quod." Some of them related that they had been in the "stone jug" three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, and up to a score times; yea, even with glee some of the children gave me an account of the things they had stolen as they had passed from door to door on their thieving rambles. Now was the opportunity, I thought, during a lull in the conversation, to change the subject, and began to relate some of the beautiful things I had seen and lovely countries I had passed through; the loving smiles, gentle looks, and kind actions I had been brought in contact with; the many real, good-hearted friends I had; the many lovely flowers, delightful walks, and pleasant companions there were ready to join the travellers travelling in my country; water was rippling, birds were singing, sun was shining, and a land flowing with milk and honey in view, with long life into the bargain. As I recited these things to them they all—poor things!—stared with open mouths as they had never stared before. They now drew close to me. Although the odour was anything but agreeable, I kept on relating to them the blessings and advantages of my coun-

try, till they one and all cried out, with bated breath, "How far is it to your country, governor? Will it be the same for us if we go?" I said, "Yes, my good friends, it will be so for you and more. Will you go?" They now cried out, "We will go; but we shall have to trust you to get us out of this place." "All right," I said; "I will try to find a way out of this miserable hole somehow or other for you."

I began to puzzle my brains as to how their deliverance was to be accomplished. For some little time I pondered the matter over, when it occurred to me that at the bottom end of the dismal room I had noticed a place upon the wall which looked like a door that had been plastered over in somebody's time by pieces of old rags and paper.

I drew near to it, and scanned it over more closely. After feeling round the edges of it for a few minutes, one of the oldest and most wretched-looking gipsies spoke out in hasty tones, and with an amount of warmth that led me to hesitate for a moment to hear what further he had to say. He stopped short. So I said, "Well, Righteous Palmer, what is there behind this opening if I should proceed to find out?" "Oh, a lot, I'm told by those who know. Our place is bad enough, as our old witch knows, and you know, sir; but nothing like what there is behind that there 'opening,'" pointing with his finger, "and if I was you, my dear good gentleman, I would not stir a peg to see any further. We should not like to see any harm come to you. If it had been anybody else we should not have minded a bit; we would as soon given him a chuck to Nick as look at him, and been glad o' the job, and ground his bones to powder, and played at football with his skull." I said, "Well now, Palmer, if you do not mind, we will see."

"If you do," said Palmer, "and get into any trouble, or

into a place out of which you cannot get back, you must not blame us." "Will you do what you can to help me?" I said. "Oh yes, we will do what we can for you in any way." "All right," I said. I now took out my pocket knife and began to cut and pull some of the paper and old rags off what now was appearing to be a door. The old witches, "hags," and grey-bearded, bloated, and thin, wretched-looking men, and swarms, almost, of poor emaciated children, eagerly closed round me to see what it would end in. The stinking fire was stirred up to cause fresh light; and in the meantime I kept cutting away, which was no light task, for there were many old knots and rusty nails to be faced. Some of the poor children cried out, "By Jove, it is a door! Wonder where it leads to?" "All right," I said, "wait and we will see." And I worked, tugged, and toiled, sometimes in the midst of breathless silence, and at others in a gipsy noise loud enough to drown my own voice and noise of my tinkering. At last the door seemed to be pretty loose. Nervousness and fear seemed to creep over me more than ever as I neared the end. Questions kept popping up in my mind, "Where will it lead to? If it did not lead to an opening and daylight," I said to myself more than once, "I am a done man." "Lord help me," I said, as I put my hand to the door to push it or pull it one way or the other. At last I pulled it open. There was the faintest light to be seen from somewhere, but I could not tell where. All the gipsies came nearer to me, and I said to one of the strongest of them, "Hold my hand, for I do not know where it will lead to. It will either be to my ruin or your happiness." "We will hold you," cried one and all; "you shan't fall at any rate." "Thank the Lord for this," I said, and with much trembling I took the first step, not knowing whether it was to be downhill or uphill. In putting my feet out I felt my toe go against something hard. I kicked again

and again, and found it to be a stone step. I then put my foot upon it. The gipsies were still at my coat tail. I then put both feet upon it, and felt at the walls, which seemed to widen out. A little more light was manifest, but still I could not tell where it came from. I kept groping and feeling my way step after step. More light of a yellowish tint, not of the cold moonlight hues, was now becoming more visible. The gipsies, especially the children, began to get eager to see the end of it. First one and then another of them said more than once, "The light seems nice; I wonder where it comes from?" The old gipsies were, with this light, made to look most horrible, and slunk back, but the children stuck to me. A great wide passage was now manifest; and altogether an uphill work was becoming more pleasant and cheerful. The gipsy children seemed to be round me by hundreds, and for the life of me I could not tell where they came from. A more miserable lot could not be imagined. Some of the children cried out, "Governor, it seems a long way to the top; how far is it?" Another twenty steps brought us to the top in full face to the rising sun; singing birds filling the air with their chanting; lovely flowers and beautiful mansions, blossoming trees rich with bud, blossom, and fragrance; groves, parks, and long walks without end. The deer were bounding, cattle grazing, and the big lambs were calling out for their mothers. In the long winding distance, at the top of a hill, stood a golden city, whose mansions and palaces were built of large blocks of precious stones, with an arch spanning over the whole composed of a succession of rainbows, with rays of glory indescribable, anxiously forcing their way to add lustre to the scene through the occasional openings to be seen in the illuminated arch. My heart was so overjoyed at having arrived at the top, and seeing vast crowds of little gipsy children brought out of darkness, I began to sing out lustily, with tears in my eyes—

"There's a land that is fairer than day,
And by faith we can see it afar,
For the Father waits over the way,
To prepare us a dwelling-place there."

And as if by magic, the children sang touchingly the chorus, in which I joined—

"In the sweet by and by,
We shall meet on that beautiful shore;
In the sweet by and by,
We shall meet on that beautiful shore."

The singing of this tune woke me up, and for the life of me I could not tell where I was, or whether I was in the body or out of it. This matter was soon settled by the "boots" knocking at my door, telling me that it was a quarter-past five o'clock. I partook of a hasty breakfast, and by six o'clock, with the musical bells chiming round me, I was among the gipsies in the fair, some of whom were settling down to their quarters, others were grumbling, and in not a few instances rows were brewing, owing to the space allotted to them not being up to their anticipation. On my way from my lodging to the town I passed a number of most wretched spectacles drawn by donkeys and ponies, fit for the knacker's yard.

Upon a tumble-down donkey-cart covered over with sticks and old sheeting, drawn by a donkey dressed in harness not worth sixpence, which was tied together with string and pieces of rope, there were women and six poor half-dressed, half-starved, dirty, ragged children. The sight was most pitiable. The little dirty faces, with matted hair, peering through an opening in the rotten calico canvas, reminded me of a nest of young rabbits, rather than human beings with immortal souls, endowed with reason, thought, and intellect, and in the image of God, peeping out of their hole among the dead grass. Oh! what a contrast, I *thought, to* the architectural grandeur and beauty of the

mansions on either hand as they passed through the streets. Why and wherefore is the cause? But I must not stop now to inquire. This problem I must work out later on.

The toll clerk with an amount of tact managed to squeeze the two hundred and twenty vans and shows into the square, keeping fairly the worst kinds in the background, and the best-looking with their faces towards "Lunnun." "I have," said the clerk, "much to do to get them all placed. After I have done all I can, I cannot keep them from rows and quarrels. Sometimes it is worse than what you see now. There are many more vans than there are in the fair this morning." I said to him, "How many do you think there are here this morning?" "Well, sir, there are considerably over two hundred. I counted early yesterday afternoon in one string between here and Somers Town, a hundred and seventy-two vans, and others have been coming since." At this juncture he spied a gipsy with his van and establishment taking up their abode in the churchyard under the tall trees. He said, "I must be off to stop them." I followed him to see how the bronzed old gipsy would take to his veto. Fortunately he took to the dismissal with good grace, and more than once said, "Thank you, my good gentleman." This is one of the characteristics of the old romantic gipsies, when they want anything by favour; seeing that it is not in their power to get it either by craft or bounce, they can ask with much grace, and in this way they often succeed. After the toll clerk was gone I had a chat with the gipsy—who, to his credit, had good cattle between the shafts of his vans. He said that he had at home—but did not say where his home was—eleven grey horses, out of his stock of thirteen. I took his statement with a pinch of salt, and moved off, leaving him to mumble over a joke I left behind, while he changed his quarters.

Not far from this scene there stood at a van door a tall,

bony, dirty-looking man, in an almost nude state, and a lot of dirty, ragged children, and the "old woman" washing, hard and fast, some dirty linen in a tin bucket. It struck me that in this case, as with others, dispatch was the soul of business, and I loitered about to see what "shifts" this gipsy family would adopt. Scrub, rub, and a dash into the hot water went the dirty linen. After two or three good rubs and tussels with the linen in the bucket, she pulled it out and wrung it as if she was "screwing its neck off." When this was over she gave it a good shake, and handed it to her "old man" without drying. The "old man" retired for a few minutes, and then he appeared with a dirty white shirt on his back, sticking more closely to his body than would have been agreeable to most people. Fortunately the warm sun was shining, and by exposing it to the sun's rays during his pacing backwards and forwards in the square for an hour, he presented a better spectacle. At night upon the stage, with his painted face and coloured pantaloons, his grimy, smoke-coloured shirt passed off fairly well. I could see that the poor children, who stood round the door with matted hair, were to have the same measure dealt out to them that was dealt out to the "old man." I am not at all surprised to find that diseases of various kinds should be creeping among our present-day gipsies, the bulk of whom wash and dry their linen on their limbs and bodies as above. Among the old gipsies rheumatic diseases were not known, but it is not so now; and it cannot be wondered at when we take into account that men, women, and children cause their bodies to do in wet weather what the "clothes horse" should do, and in fine weather what the "clothes line" should do. Such is "gipsy life" in this nineteenth century, in this our enlightened England.

One of the horses belonging to one of the gipsy vans had had nearly enough of it; and for the life of him the gipsy

could not get the poor old horse to stir a peg, except to kick, and this it could do as well, if not better, than a "four-year-old." I expected every minute to see the van over on its side, and the woman and children sprawling in the road. Fortunately, a few fellow-gipsy brothers put their shoulders to the wheel, and wheeled it off to right quarters.

In other vans "rock" and "toffy" making was going on with vengeance. I'll take one case to show the kind of process carried out, and what town's children and others have to swallow during feasts, mops, and fair time.

Surrounded by several vans and carts there was a fire in an old bucket, round which stood men, women, and a lot of poor little gipsy roadside Arabs. Presently into the pot over the fire—a large old kettle—a gipsy woman puts a lot of the commonest dirty-looking sugar, and some butter, or "butterine," and when it has begun to boil, one of the children stirs it with a dirty stick for a time. After the boiling process is over, it is taken out and handed to the man or woman, as the case may be, to be "pulled" or twisted into the long walking-stick shape you see on some of the low, dirty gingerbread stalls attending fairs. A light-coloured "rock," or "toffy," is made by adding lighter-coloured sugar and flour.

The light-coloured "rock" and the dark-coloured "rock" are then mixed and twisted together, forming what is called the "scrodled rock." The mixing process gives the hands of the mixers a clean appearance inside, contrasting strongly with the back of the hands, which at times, with this class of folks, resemble very much in colour the backs of tortoises or toads. George Herbert, in the "Fuller Worthies" Library, might almost have seen and tasted some such like, when he wrote—

"A sweetmeat of hell's table, not of earth."

A few yards from this manufacturing process there were

man, woman, and two little children "as clean as pinks," and a boy, who was scrubbing himself, head and shoulders, down to the waist, till he was "all of a white lather." This case, and the few others I saw of a similar nature, were the "new comers on the road." I expect to hear of their rising as a cow's tail grows.

A laughable incident occurred while I was standing by watching the boy scrub at his head as if he meant to fetch the hair up by "the roots." From beneath one of the vans a big black dog sallied forth down the fair with a piece of white paper in its mouth, carefully wrapped up, and much resembling a parcel of sandwiches. No sooner was the dog in the fair than some of the gipsies were after it, crying out, "Stop it! Stop it!" At first the dog would not listen; ultimately it stopped. The gipsies came up to the frightened animal. Everybody expected the dog had run away with something valuable in the shape of eatables, if nothing else. One big gipsy cried out to the dog, "Down with it! Down with it!" The dog did as it was told. This was no sooner done than the gipsy picked up the paper, and began to carefully unwrap it, when, to the horror of the gipsy and a few others who had taken part in the chase, and roars of laughter of onlookers, it turned out to be a paper containing a few bloaters' heads and other unpalatable trifles. The parcel was dropped much quicker than it was picked up. Another laugh burst forth. The huntsmen pinched their noses and slunk away. One said, "I thought he had got somebody's grub."

I now came upon Mr. Bachelor Nabob Brown, a chimney-sweeping gipsy—and a most curious stick he was—in charge of a weighing machine and a few other trifles. He was just turning out of his bed, which had been in his cart, covered with a yellow sheet. Nine o'clock was the time he had promised overnight to be ready for a stroll. He got up, gave himself a rub, yawn, and a stretch, and

set to work lighting his fire in the usual gipsying drawing-room fireplace among the other gipsies. Of course washing was out of the question. He boiled his water, stewed his tea, frizzled his bloater, and then set to work upon his breakfast with a strong smell of paraffin oil pervading the whole of the contents of his "larder." Nabob Brown combed his hair with his fingers, threw on his patched and ragged old pilot Chesterfield, and off we started for a tramp to the outskirts of Oxford. We had not gone far before he began to apologize for not being dressed as a gentleman, and said, "You don't mind, sir, do you, at me walking along with you in this cut and figure?" I said, "Oh no, I do not mind in the least. Very few know me personally in Oxford, but it would make no difference to me if they did. If it would help on the cause of the gipsy children, I would as soon have my dinner with a gipsy as with a prince." "All right, my friend," said Mr. Nabob Brown; "I'm glad to hear you say that. I know who I am talking to." In going along I said to Nabob, "I should like to know a little about your family." "All right," he said; "that's just what I wanted. Let me tell you, sir, that the 'Browns' are amongst the best families in the land. In our family are dukes, lords, M.P.'s, and squires without end, and never a one has done anything wrong. They are all high-class and first-rate folks. In everything that is good a 'Brown' starts it. I feel proud that my name is 'Brown.'" I said, "I thought Smith was not a bad name." "They are nothing like the 'Browns,'" said Nabob. "Smiths stand second, Browns stand first. I shall come in for a fortune one of these days before long, and I shall not forget you. Will you give me your address?" I said, "Yes, with pleasure; I shall be glad to have the prospect of a fortune again for my children's sake." "All right, give me your card." I handed him my card, and the poor "cracked" fellow wrapped it up and put it into his pocket.

Mr. Nabob Brown stopped, rubbed and scratched in the street, and commenced again as follows:

"I am one of fifteen children, and the only one living, thank God. My father was George Brown, who served thirty-five years in the Fifty-second Light Infantry. He was present at the battles of Waterloo, Salamanca, and Badajos; after which he was pensioned off. He spent three years in Chelsea Hospital, and was then taken to the soldiers' madhouse at Norwich, and there he died. People say that I am getting like him, but they are fools and don't know what they are talking about. I'm as sensible as any man in the country—don't you think so?" I told him I did "not like answering questions of that kind without longer experience." "My father was of a drunken family, and it was in one of his drunken fits when he tumbled me downstairs and put out one of the joints of my backbone." We now came to a dead stand opposite one of the colleges and near to some large houses. People big and little, gentle and simple, were passing to and fro. He now turned his back towards me and bent his head low to the wall. He then turned up the tail ends of his old coat, exhibiting his under ragged garments, and took hold of my hand and poked my finger into a small dent in the slight bend upon his back. Of course I consented. He next took off his old hat and poked my finger into a hole upon his head. All the time his tongue was going at the rate of "nineteen to the dozen." Mr. Nabob's arms began to swing backwards and forwards, and he shouted out, "I live by excitement; without it I should die." Children began to stare and gather round us, but before doing so I said, "I suppose you cannot stand drink?" "Oh dear no! I have been teetotal these twenty-five years, on and off, and am religious in my heart, but I doesn't always show it. I goes to church sometimes. I'm a Church of England man; but then you know, sir, we in our profession cannot do without

telling lies sometimes. I'm giving up all bad things, women and everything else. If it was not for being religious at my heart I should have been dead long ago." He now began to "dance and caper about the road." Fortunately we were close to the grounds round Christ Church College, and very few saw his megrims.

We had now arrived opposite a small conservatory with some beautiful flowers in view. The pretty flowers sent Mr. Bachelor Nabob Brown off at a tangent. "Oh!" said Mr. Brown, "I love flowers. It is delightful to be among flowers. I could die among flowers. I'm a first-rate gardener." The names he gave to some of the commoner sorts of flowers he saw were anything but Latin or English. The small rivulet, green meadows, tall trees, pleasant walks, with the burning sun shining overhead, seemed to have excited Mr. Nabob's dormant artistic qualities, and he commenced to give me specimens of his musical abilities. After he had done he said, "I never had any regular training, or I should have been one of the 'stars;' as it is I can play the fiddle, concertina, piano—in fact, I should not be stuck fast at anything. I consider myself to be a regular musician, and no mistake. Oh, my back and my head, sir. Let us sit down for a chat under one of these trees." "All right," I said, "I am quite ready." Several gentlemen and ladies paced backwards and forwards, no doubt wondering who we were or what our movements meant. Maybe, for aught I know, that some of them thought that we had dynamite designs upon Christ Church College; or that we were "two poor wandering lunatics." Mr. Nabob Brown next poured forth his other qualifications —adaptability and practice in photography, jewelling, shop-keeping, selling tobacco, sweets, and fruits. His recital of these things brought him upon his feet again; and he shouted out with his arm aloft, "Would you believe me, sir? I lost over a hundred pounds in 'dissolving views.'"

him jokingly that I was not surprised at it. "There were so many wicked men in the world who have not brains and force of character sufficient to carry them through the difficulties of life, and therefore their only course was to get upon somebody's back and allow themselves to be carried to a safe place. I have seen many men of this class in my time." "Right you are, sir. That is just how I have been served through life. I have not only had my brains run away with, but my coat off my back; aye, and one time a big black dog ran away with a piece of my leg. Oh! oh!" shouted Brown, with a twinged face, "gipsies are terrible devils. We are a bad lot, but I don't like to tell everybody, nor do I like to say all I know, or they would be down upon me at the next fair, and I should have no peace in my life; I might as well be hung. Give it the policemen; I don't like them chaps, they are no good to anybody. Blow me!" Nabob cried out as we came to a sudden stop on the road, "I left my old umbrella in my cart when we started, and I'll bet a farthing it will be gone when we get back; let's be off." So we began to trot off together, leaving the austere, grim walls of Christ's College to stand the rude and rugged storms of centuries from without, and the assaults of dogmas, creeds, divinity, law, philosophy, moral force, and logic from within. On our way he told me of the tricks practised by the stall-keeping gamblers upon their wheels of fortune, and the hoodwinking process the policemen undergo at fair times.

We had now arrived at the post office, and Brown said, "Just one word before we part," and I chimed in, "Perhaps never to see each other again." "I say, sir, I quite agree with you that all our travelling children should receive a free education as you propose, and the publicans should be made to pay for it. Good-bye, sir, and God bless you," and away he popped out of sight into the post office, and I sauntered into the fair.

In charge of a gambling cocoa-nut concern I noticed a gipsy named I——, with his hand tied up, which he said was brought about by blood-poisoning. In the van were two brothers and one sister. Connected with this family there were seventeen brothers and sisters, together with father and mother, making a total of nineteen human beings. And only one out of the whole could read and write, and this one, to his everlasting credit, had early in life given up gipsying and put himself out as an apprentice to engineering, and during his apprenticeship he had, unaided by any teacher except his workmates, taught himself to read and write. All honour to such men, be they gipsies, canal boatmen, or brickmakers. As I noticed his good brother, who had run over to the fair for a day to assist his lame brother and their sister, I could not help seeing the vast contrast between the two men. Self-help and education had raised one from a gipsy tramp to the position of an engineer at a salary of thirty-five shillings per week, with his nights to himself.

I next turned again to my friend George Smith, the gipsy, who, with his wife and six children, were attending to their cocoa-nut concern. George Smith was just having his lunch, to which he invited me. Of course I joined him, notwithstanding the crush of the fair. Smith did not know of more than one gipsy among all their relations who could read and write.

Early in the morning I paid a visit to one of the vans, and there saw a woman and her six little girls, and one little boy about three years old, in a most wretched, dirty condition. They were thin, and some of their young faces looked prematurely old. She knew me, and the poor slave of a mother seemed ashamed of their condition. I gave them a lot of pictures, cards, &c., and left them to make their way. It was heartrending to see the poor pretty children scan the pictures, anxious to know what they were about,

but unable to tell a letter. Despair seemed to come over their faces, as they turned them over and over and from side to side. Later on in the afternoon I again paid a visit to them. Of course in the morning I was behind the scenes; but in the afternoon more phases appeared; they were in "public." In the van was wretchedness and misery, and all the other evils attending such a course of life; but on the "boards" they were fairies, dressed in lively pretty colours, dancing, skipping, and riding about, not from love, but from pressure and force. You could see as the six pretty children danced about that their smiles were forced. I saw them about six months since, and I now noticed a marked haggard change in their features. The husband had the "light end of the stick." He fared well, and did well, and worked but little. I could hear the chaps round me say of the mother, as she moved to and fro upon the platform, or outdoor stage, and whose fanciful dresses were none too long, that it was her "legs" that drew the crowds round their establishment. Others said she was "well limbed." She certainly was more presentable in the evening than in the morning. In my opinion it was the little girls who were the mainstay of the concern.

I could not help noticing the vast number of clergymen moving about. The prettily dressed, and not bad-looking woman had charms for some of them—old and young. She had a good head of black hair, as most gipsies have. Probably her witching eyes and tresses tickled the fancies of the clerical onlookers. One grave-looking clergyman walked up the fair very sedately, not seeming to notice such nonsense, but I could see him glancing out of the corner of his eye at the woman and her children as they danced about. It may be that he was there for the same purpose as I was, viz., to see both sides of gipsying, the evil and the good. If such was the case, I am sure that he found it like the Irishman found his wife, nearly "all *bad and no good.*"

In the fair, and with smiling looks, pleasant tongue, and busy hand, was Mr. Wheelhouse, the Oxford city missionary, trying to sell his heavenly books. A few came and looked, and turned away, notwithstanding the low prices at which he offered his soul-saving wares. Trash! bosh! Dash and a splash into the Oxford English gipsying was what the crowd wanted, and some of them had it to their heart's content, with shadows of the morrow's sorrows hanging over them as they dived deep into sin. Occasionally the missionary would have a customer, which caused him to smile like a full-blown rose.

The good old man, as he gave me a parting grip, said, "God bless you in your noble work. I've long wanted to see you. God bless you, good-bye," and he gave me an extra squeeze, and I then jostled into the crowd.

I noticed three or four of the most respectable gipsy-looking men soliciting subscriptions. It could not be for taxes, I thought, for gipsies never pay taxes—at least those who do not hawk and don't live in houses. I inquired what their loss was, and I was told that a young woman, one of the mainstays of one of the establishments in the fair, had been burnt to death the previous week in one of the vans. The organ, van, and contents had gone to the winds, and the poor woman's charred black remains consigned to the cold, cold sod, and tears and black crape left to tell the tale. How she came to her untimely end was not fairly cleared up at the inquest. When the great book is opened it will be made clear. I gave them some silver, and when they asked in what name it was to be entered, of course I told them, and they opened their eyes with wondrous curiosity and amazement. I shook hands with them, and for some minutes I was lost in the crowd. I suppose they had been told by wicked outsiders that I had nothing but hard words for the gipsies and travellers.

A big, idle, hulking-looking fellow of a gipsy now

"boned" me. He wanted me to lend him a shilling—as he said—for his wife and children. I tackled him. I asked him what he was doing in the fair. He said he was a collier out of work. I asked him to let me look at his hands. After shuffling about a little he let me look at his hands. I could see plainly that he was not a collier. I said, "You have not had a 'coal-pick' in your hands to work with it in your life." At this he seemed to get into a rage. I said, "The marks you show me have been done upon the 'wheel of fortune' in the 'stone jug.' This he did not deny. When I asked him about the prices colliers have per ton for getting coal he was nonplussed. I said, "Now, before I give you anything, I want to see your wife and four children," and away we started to find them, on their way to Banbury. I turned back; but still the fellow was boring me to lend him a shilling, and he vowed and vowed that he would repay me the amount. At this juncture he bolted into a stationer's shop for a piece of paper, upon which he wanted me to write my address, so that he might send me the shilling back. I followed him into the shop, and quite a scene ensued. The gipsy tramp could neither beg a piece nor buy it. At last, after ten minutes' wrangling over a piece of paper, the shopman gave him an old envelope, and we came out of the shop. Nothing would serve his purpose but that I was to write my address. So to please, and to get rid of the ignorant, idle, dirty scamp, I wrote upon the recently begged old envelope, "Jupiter Terrace, Moonlight Street, Starland." The fellow wrapped it up very carefully, and put it into his pocket, and I then gave him sixpence and left him, telling him that he was to send the amount in postage stamps, as I could not get post-office orders cashed at the address I had given him. I expect the sixpence and the gipsy tramp are on the wing still.

In the fair there were over fifteen gambling tables—*i.e.*,

tables upon which there were all kinds of gipsy nick-nacks and fairy trifles, some of which were sold and others gambled for. On the table there was a large painted wheel, something like a clock-face or compass, with a swinging finger or hand. Round the outer edge of the wheel stood a lot of things, chiefly ornamental children's toys in fern cases, fancy boxes, and other ornaments. Those who wanted to "try their luck" had to put down a penny opposite the thing they fancied. When several had done this, and the pennies were studded about the wheel, then swing went the finger round and round till it stopped—seldom where the pennies were. The finger seemed to either just go past the mark or to stop short of it. All blanks and no prizes seemed to be the order of the day. I saw one lady dressed in silk, with a lot of young women, girls, and boys round her, gamble several shillings away on the "wheel of fortune." It was a most pitiable sight to see the vast numbers of well-dressed young persons and children receiving their first lessons in gambling, in the shadows of churches and colleges. I was told, by those who knew, that the "wheels of fortune" and "shows" made more money than all the other things in the fair put together. It was a sunny fair for the gambling stall-keepers, but not for the patron saint under whose auspices it was held. I rather fancy the saints of bygone days, to whom the colleges and churches were dedicated, would look down upon the assembly with abashed countenances at the work of sin going on under the shadow of the Oxford sacred precincts, and, it would seem, had retired in favour of Discordia, Momus, Mars, et Pluto. The big and little gamblers could win when the proprietors thought well to allow the smiles of fortune to descend upon them. Fortune's smiles consisted in the pressing of the stall-keeper's thigh against a stud, that operated underneath the top of the table against the swivel upon which the finger

or hand was placed, and he could stop it whenever he liked. After many blanks he would let one of his fools occasionally win, just to encourage others.

I was put up to this move by one of the gipsies, but with strict injunctions that I was not to let the "cat"—*i.e.*, my informant—"out of the bag." When I told my friend the gipsy that gambling of this kind was against the law, "Yes," he said, "and the 'bobbies' are down upon us in some places for it; and they would no doubt have been so here, but they have been 'squared.'" When he talked about "squaring," I thought I would "try" him and "prove" him, but found him to be blank. I found out that this "squaring" process consisted in blinding the policemen with "silver-dust." The fact is this kind of gambling is growing to an alarming extent in the country under the policemen's noses, and this they know right well, and take no steps to stop it. Of course the Oxford police as a body of men could not be held accountable for the dereliction of duty by a few of them. As a whole they are a fine lot of village soldiers.

I next turned my step towards one of the shows. There was upon the platform, or stage, a sharp little fiery woman beating the drum—which sounded like a kitchen table—and bawling out till she was hoarse, "Now, ladies and gentlemen, if you want to see the best show in the fair, now is your time; they are just going to begin. Come up quick, and take your places," and she banged again at the old drum as if she was going to knock the bottom out. Beside the sharp, ready-tongued woman stood "Boscoe," dressed, daubed, and painted like a Red Indian, whose rough visage and broken nose had the appearance of having been in many a "fisticuffing" encounter. Although he was daubed over, I recognized him as one with whom I had had a long chat on Sunday afternoon, and who pleasantly received some of my books for his children. Boscoe noticed

me in the crowd, and gave me a few of his sly winks while the megrims were going on. Close to "Boscoe" stood a tall, wretched, half-starved, red-faced looking man, the picture of a beer-barrel in his face, with red-herring tendencies from the shoulders downwards. On the ground there were his wretched, lantern-jawed wife and their six ragged children. Their home was a donkey cart covered over with rags, and a bed of rags was what those eight human beings had to lie upon, and I could have said with Burns—

> "Oh, drooping wretch, oppressed with misery!"

and as she stood cowering and trembling I could have said with Crashaw, "Oh, woman!—

> "'Upwards thou dost weep;
> Heaven's bosom drinks the gentle stream.'"

I should like to have whispered in her ear, "Weep on, poor woman, weep on. Weep on, poor children, weep on. Your tears will bring down the mighty arm of the Great Living Father, which shall deliver you from this wretched tramping life of misery and degradation. Look up! look up! His hand draweth nigh. The Friend of the children hears the children's cries, and woe be to the nation or people who step in to prevent the gipsy children receiving the embraces of a loving heavenly Father."

After the performance "Boscoe" came off the stage and invited me to go into the "show," which invitation I accepted, and was led in by the side door. I witnessed "Boscoe's" tricks, such as eating fire, making leaden bullets, putting a red-hot poker down his throat, and drawing a red-hot bar across his tongue, and the bending of red-hot iron bars with his feet. "There are dodges in every trade, except rag-gathering," said the old rag-woman the other day, as she sat by the side of the brook, wetting

her rags before she sold them. The acrobat performances of a poor boy about twelve were cruel in the extreme. After one of his movements I could see that the poor thin-faced lad was suffering intense pain by his twinging and limpy walk. This poor specimen of humanity could not read or write a sentence. To bend, twist, twirl, and contort the limbs and bones of a poor child to bring smiles upon the faces of fools—for they are no better who witness such exhibitions—is hellish, and money gotten in this way provides those engaged in it with "workhouse" and "spittles" uniform. Other performances, such as a pony telling fortunes, &c., brought the entertainment to a close. On coming away old "Boscoe" came off the stage to shake hands with me among the crowd, which circumstance seemed to puzzle some of the bystanders.

I had a turn round with the gingerbread and toy stall-keepers, and I was not long among them before I found out two old "backsliders," one of whom was from Northampton, and until two years ago was a "member of a class." Now, with her son, she was tramping the country, and attending fairs and races in the daytime, and sleeping under their stall at night! A chat with her about old times, and the "blessed seasons" she once had, and the peace of mind she once enjoyed, brought scalding tears to her eyes, as copiously as if I had been talking to her of the death of a darling rosy-cheeked, curly-headed little boy, whose little wax taper flickered out as its soul was being wafted to Paradise in the midst of a convoy of angels. The good woman with quivering lips said, "Do you remember giving me, sir, at Long Buckby, a little book and a picture card?" I said, "Yes." "Well, I sent them to my son, who is a soldier in South Africa, and they pleased him very much." I could see that I could press the subject a little nearer home, and I said to her, "How do you get on with this kind of life? How do you manage

to say your prayers at night?" "Well," she said, "this kind of life is not the right thing, and I am not what I ought to be; but somehow or other I say my prayers at night, and feel safer after it. I hope to give up travelling and settle down again." While moistened sorrow was reddening her eyes, I said in substance if not in words—

> "'Tis a star about to drop
> From thine eye, its sphere;
> The sun will stoop to take it up."

With a deep, deep-drawn sigh she bade me good-night several times over, and the curtain dropped.

I now came upon a man and woman sitting at a weighing machine. (I might state that I was weighed at two different weighing machines in the fair. Nabob Brown's machine put me down at eleven stone ten pounds, and F——'s machine showed that I weighed twelve stone and eleven pounds.) Both looked above the ordinary kind of gipsies. The clean, good-looking woman was nursing a baby, and trying the weight of "ladies and gentlemen," and the man was "ringing" his cheap fashionable sticks off to those who would try "three throws a penny."

This couple, I soon found out, were Primitive Methodist "backsliders." Their names were F——, although they were known among the travellers as W——. His father was one of the oldest local preachers in the Brinklow district. He had worked hard in the cause of the Great Master, and had succeeded in raising a "Band of Hope," two hundred members strong, in one of the London districts; but in the fulness of his heart, and in what turned out to be an evil moment for him, he admitted another "brother" as a co-secretary, who, instead of helping my friend the gipsy in the good work, supplanted him, and "collared" the tea-cake, at which the committee winked. This worked up the tender feelings of my gipsy

friend to such a pitch that he withdrew from the society he had raised, and took the downhill turning, and in this course both he and his wife are, at the time of writing this, gipsying the country.

Richard Crashaw says—

> "These are the knotty riddles
> Whose dark doubts
> Entangle his lost thoughts
> Past getting out."

I asked my friend F—— a few questions about the gipsies he had been mixed up with. Among other questions was the following. "Now, Mr. F——, how many gipsies and travellers have you known, during your travels, to attend a place of worship on Sundays?" "Well, sir," said Mr. F——, "you ask me a straightforward question and I will give you a straightforward answer. I do not remember ever having seen one." I said, "This state of things is truly awful." "Yes," he said; "it is no more awful than true. I'm getting tired of it, and I think I shall settle down this next winter."

A long conversation with them both brought out tears, downcast looks, and sighs, which contrasted somewhat strangely with the yelling "fools," "clowns," and simpletons in the fair. I gave them and their children some books, pictures, &c., and they in return gave me a walking stick as a "keepsake," which I shall preserve; and after shaking hands several times over, I toddled off into the fair, to wander among the vans with my "keepsake" stick in my hand, gently tapping the gipsy children as they turned up their smiling faces.

It was now about eleven o'clock, the buzz and din of fools, wise men and simple, was getting gradually less. The echo was getting fainter and fainter. The crowd was thinning. Policemen seemed to be numerous; the gipsies' dogs were sneaking from under the vans, and prowling

after bones and thrown-out trifles. The swearing of drunken gipsies was heard more distinctly than ever. The gipsy women—some of whom had "had a little too much"—were loud in their oaths and hard words. In many instances blows threatened to be the outcome. Children were screaming, and big sons and daughters were quarrelling.

Half-past eleven arrived, and the inmates of the two hundred and twenty vans and shows, numbering about a thousand men, women, and children, were bedding themselves down in their, in many instances, wretched abodes. As I wandered among them at midnight hour I felt a cold chill of horror creeping over me, and nightly dewdrops of sorrow forcing their way down my face. To witness the sight I saw was enough to cause the blood to freeze in any man's veins. One of the most hellish sights upon earth is a dirty, drunken, swearing woman putting her children to bed upon rags undressed and unwashed, and with a flickering candle dying in the socket. Fathers and mothers, sons and daughters all lying mixed together, numbering on an average four, six, eight, ten, and twelve men, women, and children, of all ages and sizes, in the space of a covered waggon, is what ought never to be allowed in any civilized country, much less Christian England, which spends millions in trying to convert the Indian, civilize the savage, transform the Chinaman, Christianize the African, and in preparing the world for the millennium which is to follow the redeeming efforts of Christ's followers. Oh! haste happy day, when John's vision shall dawn upon us with all its never-ending transcendent splendour, tenderness, and heavenly reality.*

* "OUR GIPSY CHILDREN.—(To the Editor of the *Daily News*.)—Sir, I counted to-day at the great Oxford Fair over two hundred and twenty vans and covered carts, in each of which there would be an average of four children and two men and women living and huddling together regardless of every principle of decency. In many cases filth, dirt,

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

Not half a dozen of this thousand human beings would be offering up an evening prayer other than that of hell. The backsliding woman from Northampton and her son had crept for the night under their stall. Of course she had said her prayers, as she had told me, according to her wont, by the side of their stall, or may be after she had

and ignorance prevailed to an alarming extent. Not a few of the poor women and children exhibited signs of their having been in close warfare with rough treatment. Not five per cent. of the thousand human beings could read and write a sentence. What a farce upon our Christianity and civilization it is to have this mass of human beings living actually in the centre of learning, religious influences, and civilization. We have Bibles, ministers, colleges, sanitary officers, and education inspectors on every hand, and no power but the policeman exerting any influence over our poor lost wanderers. What I want is that their thirty thousand children should receive a free education—as I propose in an amending Bill to meet the case of the canal children—and their vans registered and brought under the influence of the sanitary officers on a simple plan. The gipsies themselves will hail a measure of this kind with considerable delight."

This letter brought forth a reply, to which I rejoined as follows:

"Your correspondent's repudiation of my statements in your issue of the 5th inst. does not alter the facts—not 'ideas'—which were given to me by the travellers themselves in broad daylight in the midst of a pouring rain, with the object of getting their condition improved, not by winking and blinking at the evil and allowing it to grow into a more dangerous sore, to be dealt with by the policeman, but to be faced by extending the blessings of a free education to all travelling children, and bringing sanitation to their homes. His statements about immorality have been manufactured by himself; but as he has been good enough to take my references and weave them into a cap which fits, I must allow him the pleasure of wearing it. The sad facts, seen by myself, in my possession, in addition to those published in my 'Gipsy Life,' will most assuredly come to light some day. With reference to his remarks about no gipsy vans being at Oxford

drawn their tent covering round them for the night; at any rate I left them to have one other peep at my friends the gipsies F—— before wending my way to my lodgings. On arriving at the van I saw a flickering light in the windows. The top window was nearly shut. The woman had had *a little too much*, but not sufficient to drive her wild or out of her senses. The husband had been "cross" with her. They had finished their midnight meal. The poor little children were almost "dead sleepy," and for a minute or two all was quiet, and then I heard the back-sliding mother teaching the poor sleepy children as they knelt down in the van to repeat,

"Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me,
Bless Thy little lamb to-night,
Through the darkness be Thou near me,
Keep me safe till morning light.

---

fair, this is absolutely untrue. I look upon all as gipsies who, with gipsy blood in their veins, are tramping the country, hawking and adopting gipsy usages, customs, slang, and 'rokering,' if only slightly. The fact is the old-fashioned gipsies are dead, and their places are being taken by increasing numbers of travellers who are not so romantic, living in covered carts and waggons, whose wives sometimes scrape together a little money in the summer to keep many of the men in idleness in the winter. Your correspondent takes credit for the education of the children in the winter. This he knows perfectly well is what the law requires of those who have settled homes, but he is silent about the worse than undoing the teachers' work in the summer; thereby placing the poor gipsy children upon the vagabond's path to ruin. Of course all are not alike. There are the usual good, bad, and indifferent among them. The sad condition, morally, socially, and religiously, of many of the poor gipsy and other travelling women and children is truly horrible, and no amount of wincing at the shadow of redeeming features which are to follow will stop me till the 70,000 canal and gipsy children are educated by means of a free pass book, the hard lot of the women lightened, and their travelling homes made more happy and conformable with civilized notions and ideas; and if he is wise he will help forward the work with a willing hand."

"Let my sins be all forgiven,
Bless the friends I love so well,
Take me when I die to heaven,
Happy there with Thee to dwell,
For Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

They now fastened their van top door down and bade me good-night. Their dog had snoozled under their home on wheels. Fogs and chills were creeping round. The policeman's tramp was to be heard, and with death-like silence reigning I crept between the cold sheets to toss and tumble about till the bright morning sun appeared, to fasten upon my heart the sights of the previous day at the Oxford St. Giles's fair, not to be removed till eternity dawns upon my soul with heaven in full view. To, as Marianne Farningham says in *The Christian World*—

"A land where noises of the earth
For evermore shall cease,
Where the weary ones are resting
In the calm of perfect peace."

Rambles Among the Gipsies at Hinckley Fair.

HINCKLEY September fair has for many long years been regarded as one of the greatest "screw" fairs in England, and as a place where many gipsies annually gather together to follow their usual and profitable occupation of horse-dealing. At this fair they buy all the good-looking "screws" they can put their hands upon, and palm and physic them off, temporarily, as sound horses. They both, as one told me, "make their market" and "make hay while the sun shines" at this fair. A thorough old "screw" knows as if by instinct the scent of gipsy pantaloons; and by some means, known only to a few, the horses find their way back into gipsy hands again.

With these facts before me, I was prompted to pay the gipsies a visit at their Eldorado. The morning was like a spring morning. The sun shone cheerfully, lovely, and warmingly, and was fast drying up the mud. On my way to the station some slovenly waggoner had left some thorns in the way, which I threw over the fence and passed on. I had not gone far before I found, on a rising hill, a large piece of granite in the centre of the road, which some idle and careless Johnny had left behind him.

rolled it out of the way and sped along. On the top of the hill a coal higgler had left a large lump of coal in the way—or it had jolted off while he was asleep, or akin to it. This I deposited among the thistles and nettles in the ditch, where it remained for some weeks. While I was clearing these little troublesome and somewhat dangerous things out of the way, the skylark was singing cheeringly and sweetly overhead as of spring-time. My gipsy friends would say that these were forebodings and prognostications, ruled by the planets, which indicated joys and troubles, pleasure or sorrows for the travellers, according to the amount of silver and gold there was floating about within their reach. How I was guided by the Creator and the planets, and with what success I pursued my course, will be seen before I have done rambling.

At the station a poor woman was in a difficulty. She had promised to have tea with her long-absent daughter, at the "feast" at four o'clock the same day; but, unfortunately, the train would not take her to the "feast." Notwithstanding the remonstrances of the porters, the good woman got into the train and said, "I shall go," and she sped her way, but not to the "feast."

A mother's love sees no difficulties and fears no dangers, and will draw more tears from the human fountain than any other force on this side heaven.

At Nuneaton there was the usual long time to wait; after which I duly arrived at the "screw fair."

At the entrance there was gipsy —— and his wife—with their six lost little children, and the probability of a seventh being soon added—setting up their stall.

As I neared them, the poor woman met me and said, "I don't know what to do; I ought not to be here in this market-place like this. I am liable to be down at any minute, and I don't know one in the place. I wish our Jim had settled down last spring. It is a hard lot to be a

gipsy's wife," and she began to cry. "Nobody knows what I have had to put up with since I took to travelling. Why, bless you, dear sir, it would make your heart ache if I were to tell you a tenth part of what myself and the children have gone through. Between Hilmorton and Ashby St. Ledgers will never be forgotten by me. It was a cold night, at the back end of the year; rain came down in torrents. We had only an uncovered cart for all of us to sleep in down one of the lanes. The children crouched under the cart upon the ground like dogs. Our Jim, myself, and three of the children slept, or lay down, in the body of the cart with our dripping clothes on us. We drew an old torn woollen rug over us, and did the best we could, shivering and shaking till morning. The children cried, and were half starved to death. I cannot tell you, if I went down upon my knees, of a twentieth part of our sufferings and hardships on that night, and hundreds of other nights besides. I had a black eye, and was black and blue on many parts of my body. Our Jim was very cruel at that time; but he has not been so bad lately." Her husband, Jim, is about three parts a gipsy, or between a *posh* and a Romany chal. He has six children by his first wife, living with their grandmother near Epping Forest, who are left to gipsy and take care of themselves. I don't think that he would be a bad sort of a man if it were not for "drink" and gipsy companies. The only one who can read in this family is the poor woman, and that is only very little. With tears in her eyes she said, "I often read the little books you gave me, to our Jim at bedtime, till he cries, sometimes like a baby. My heart is at times ready to break when I see how our children are being brought up." Business was beginning to look up with them, and I made myself scarce for a time. Such sad, heartrending instances of gipsy neglect, depravity, poverty, and wretchedness would be impossible

if our Government would carry out my plans for reclaiming them, and Christians and philanthropists would do their duty towards drawing them into the arms of the State and the fold of God.

I had not gone far before a terrible row was echoing in the air from a stall lower down the market, between two gipsy women and a "potato master." The gipsy women said the potato master had promised them three roasted potatoes for a halfpenny, and he had only given them two. A fight, hair-pulling, and bloodshed seemed to be in a fair way for being the outcome of this trumpery dispute, and would have taken place if the policeman had not put in an appearance. As it was the fracas ended, for the present, in nothing worse than threats of vengeance, oaths and curses being poured upon the head of the potato seller without stint or measure.

I now turned into the horse fair, and had scarcely got many yards before I found myself roughly jostled in the midst of a gipsy row over a dog. The gipsy horse-dealer had a lurcher dog with him, which was owned by a collier. The collier said his dog had been stolen by some gipsies about two months ago. High words, carrying mischief and blows, were flying about thick and fast, and bade fair to end in bloodshed and the pulling of the dog limb from limb. The dog preferred his old master to the gipsy. This the gipsy saw, and at the approach of the police the pair withdrew to a public-house to "square" matters. In the end the collier came out with his dog, which he said "had won more handicaps than any dog in the county," and off he started home, with a smile instead of blood and bruises upon his face, and the dog wagging its tail with delight at his heels, much to the chagrin and discomfiture of the gipsy.

While I was among gipsy horse-dealers I made the best use of my eyes for a little time, and one of the first

dodges of the gipsies was to hire a country Johnny to ride one of their "screws" up and down the fair. Of course the gipsies kept clear away, hoping thereby to draw the attention of customers to the horse as one that a farmer had no further use for. Johnny had very nearly sold the horse to a higgler, but "at the last pinch" the question of reducing the amount Johnny was to sell it for, by one pound, necessitated an appeal to the gipsy owner, who was not far away. The higgler saw the dodge of the gipsy and he withdrew his offer. The gipsy's blessing was given, but the higgler did not mind it, and he went to seek other quarters for horseflesh.

A little higher up the fair there stood a man with two horses, who was evidently a small farmer in somewhat needy circumstances. It might be, for anything I knew, that he was wanting some money to pay for the cutting of his corn, which was ripening very fast. The horses looked like two thoroughly good sound horses, although aged. The price he asked for the best-looking was £25, and £20 for the other. The gipsies saw that this farmer was very anxious to sell. A big, good-looking gipsy came up to him and said, "What for the big horse? Now, then, speak the lowest price you will take for it in a word." The farmer said, "£25." "Nonsense," said the gipsy; "you must think everybody is either a fool or asleep. I'll give you a 'fiver' for it, and it is dear at that price." To one of his gipsy mates he said, "Jack, jump across it and ride it up the fair." Jack jumped across the horse, and off they started at a rattling pace, almost frightening people out of their wits who were in the way. After going up and down a few times several gipsies clustered round the horse when it and its gipsy rider had cleared to outside the throng of the fair. The group stood for a few minutes, and then the horse was brought back and given up to the owner. The bargain was not struck, and the

gipsies cleared away. In the course of ten minutes the horse began to get very restless, kick, and plunge about. Sometimes it seemed as if it wanted to lie down. It would then begin to cringe and kick, much to the danger of the lookers on. The owner said that a horse-fly was on it somewhere. He stroked and tapped it, but all to no purpose. Presently another gipsy came up, evidently one of the gang, and said to the farmer, "Why, governor, your horse has either got the 'bellyache' or an inflammation; it will be dead in half an hour; what will you take for it at all risks? Now, speak your lowest figure at once." The farmer said, very much "chopfallen," "A little time ago I asked £25, but I suppose I must take less than that now." The gipsy saw his chance, and at once said, 'I will give you a 'tenner,' and not a farthing more; say either 'yes' or 'no,' and I'm off." The horse was still kicking about. The farmer, much dejected, said, 'I suppose you may as well have it." The bargain was struck and the kicking horse led away. In going up the fair a group of gipsies clustered round it with evident glee. A few hours afterwards I saw the horse led off quietly enough from Hinckley fair at the heels of a gipsy. No doubt the horse had been doctored by the gipsies in some way when they first took it in hand and while it was surrounded by the first group.

In another instance a countryman bought a horse of a "farmer-looking" gipsy and paid the money, when, just before the horse was handed over to the purchaser, another gipsy came upon the scene and claimed the horse as his own, and, apparently, threatened vengeance and the gaol to be the doom of the man who had sold the horse. The two gipsies now began to pull each other about—without any bones being broken or blood flowing—and to wrestle and struggle for the possession of the horse. The countryman had parted with his money and he had not got the horse, nor any prospect of it. Another gipsy came up and

suggested that the whole business should be ended by the countryman having his money back except ten shillings and the payment of "glasses round." To this arrangement the countryman assented, and they turned into the public-house to carry out the bargain. What sharp men and fools there are in the world, to be sure, to be met with on gipsy fair ground!

As usual there were gipsy Smiths in the fair, and without much difficulty I ran against one who was the proprietor of a popgun establishment and two shillings' worth of "toffy" stuck round a wheel of fortune. I had a long chat with him between the "cracks," and elicited the fact that he had twice tried gipsying in Ireland, but it resulted each time in a drawn game. He only visited four fairs. Irish soil and poverty are not suited for the development of gipsying. The fact is, Irishmen are too wide awake for the vagabond gipsies, and they are too much taken up with the matter-of-fact every-day life to listen to idle lying, misleading, romantic, wheedling tales designed to draw the money out of their pockets. At one of the fairs in Ireland my gipsy friend took four shillings, with a prospect of losing his tent, bag and baggage. If he had been one of Arabi's Egyptian ragamuffin soldiers frightened from Tel-el-Kebir he could not have decamped more quickly from the land of St. Patrick. The pleasure fairs of England and the fashionable squares of London, and the watering-places on the coasts are places and palaces where gipsy *kings* and *queens* thrive best.

They fatten and thrive fairly well in some places in Scotland. One cannot but smile sometimes at the ease with which some of them go through the world. If their cleverness was turned into legitimate channels and honourable business transactions, they would soon be a credit to themselves and to us as a nation. It is a thousand pities that in these educational days there are

narrow-minded croakers who, under the guise of friends—though in reality their worst enemies—are trying to keep the gipsy children in ignorance; but their object is easily seen by those who stand by and are looking quietly and thoughtfully on. These false friends smile in gipsy faces while they are robbing them of their lore to fill their empty coffers, and this the gipsies will see some day.

Gipsy Smith and myself began to enumerate all the vans in the fair, together with those living in them. There were about thirty gipsy vans, shows, covered carts, &c. In one of the vans there were eight children besides adults. In another van there were seven children besides adults. Altogether we counted over one hundred travelling children in the fair, not three of whom could read and write. Smith said that in all his travelling experience he had not known either gipsy, showman, auctioneer, or traveller ever attend a place of worship from fair grounds. "Sundays as a rule," said Smith, "are spent in travelling with their families from town to town and from place to place." Gipsy Smith lived and travelled with his wife in a covered pony-cart. There were four "Aunt Sally" stalls, which dealt out cigars to children for successful "throws." The gipsies are to-day doing more to encourage gambling and smoking than is imagined by ninety-nine out of every hundred Englishmen. The former saps the morals and the latter the minds and constitutions of those who are simple enough to indulge in them.

Before I had done talking with gipsy Smith the Salvation Army brass band from Leicester, with "Captain" Roberts from the head-quarters, one of the staff officers, hailed within sight and sound, and as I had not had the opportunity to spend an evening with the Salvation Army, to see and hear for myself something of the proceedings, I joined in the procession as an outsider. Some of the people made an eye-butt of me at which they stared. Crowds

were gathering round the band as it played in martial strains—if Mr. Inspector Denning had been there from the House of Commons better order could not have been kept—

"Hark! hark! my soul, what warlike songs are swelling
Through all the streets and on from door to door;
How grand the truths these burning strains are telling
Of that great war till sin shall be no more."

And then the vocal band with their voices would join in singing the choruses with exciting strains and gesture—

"Salvation Army, Army of God,
Onward to conquer the world with fire and blood."

After this the brass band led the next verse—

"Onward we go, the world shall hear our singing," &c.

After they had played this up the street for a time, the Army halted, and Captain Roberts and one of the lieutenants addressed some words to the "band" with fire and vigour running through them, to which the lads and lasses, young men and maidens, saints and sinners, responded with the "Old Methodist" and Primitive Methodist "Glory! glory! bless the Lord!" "Hallelujah!" "Religion is the best thing in the world!" "Glory!" another called out at the top of his voice. While the Army was giving out no uncertain sound the brass band commenced, under marching orders and exciting surroundings, reminding me of old times—

"We are marching home to glory,
Marching up to mansions bright,
Where bright golden harps are playing,
Where the saints are robed in white."

And then, in obedience to the captain's arms and orders, the lads and lasses struck up with the chorus—

"There's a golden harp in glory,
There s a spotless robe for you—
March with us to the hallelujah city,
To the land beyond the blue."

And in this way we kept on till we arrived at the "Salvation Warhouse."

A drunken man dressed in rags, but with an intelligent-looking face and a high forehead, must of needs have a word to say, and for a time a "branglement" seemed inevitable. However, with a little tact the storm blew over. After a little work at "knee drill" in the warhouse the Army rested for a short time to recruit their animal strength. While this was going on I looked out for a couch upon which to rest my bones for the night, and this I found out at Mr. Atkins', in the market-place. I then retired to get my dinner and tea in a coffee-tavern, of pork pie and coffee, among "chaps and their girls" who had come to Hinckley for a "fairing." From thence I strolled to some gipsy vans on the green, to find a number of the women washing clothes. My reception was in anything but heavenly language. The gipsies at this fair were from Staffordshire, nearly all of whom were unknown to me. If two of the women had wanted to impress a stranger with the idea that they were of the poor unfortunate gutter-scum class, they could not have used more disgusting language than they did. I chatted with them and gave the children some books and pennies, which brought sorrow from the lips of the gipsy parents for having insulted me. After strolling about among the gipsies and vans in the fair for a time, and distributing some cards and picture-books among the gipsy, show, and other travelling children, I wended my way, guided by the sound of "the light and leading" of the Salvation band, to the "Salvation shop," to spend a happy hour or two. I sat in one corner and looked quietly on, which seemed to puzzle them. The leaders all had a good stare at me; and first one and then the other would try to draw me out with the usual question, to which I replied very politely and left them in a maze. Captain Roberts

told me over breakfast on the Sunday morning that I had been a puzzle to the "band" all the previous evening; and, except to "Captain Roberts" and the good family with whom I was staying, I still remain so, for aught I know.

The Army had commenced proceedings, and at the word of command began to "fire red-hot shot at the devil." It was a lively, exciting time. The band struck up while they were sitting down—

> "My rest is in heaven, my rest is not here,
> Then why should I murmur when trials are near?
> Be hushed, my dark spirit, the worst that can come
> But shortens my journey and hastens me home."

After this the "command" was for "knee-drill." Certainly some of the language and action of the soldiers was a little out of the "Friends'" style of doing things. One soldier shouted out at the top of his voice, with a large amount of enthusiasm, "Lord, help us to kill the devil, he has troubled us long enough." Another would call out, "Lord, the devil has got some powder in his breast; light it with a match and blow his head off;" to which another soldier would reply, "Give the devil string enough and he will hang himself." "Glory!" they all shouted.

They now got off their knees, and big and little began to relate their experiences, and to "tell what the Lord had done for them." Our "good brother" in his experiences said, "While I was serving the devil, he made a sign-post of me for a rogue's shop. Now I am a member of the Salvation Army, with a bit of blue in my coat, which is better than having red on the end of your nose; "Thank God, it is good, brother; hallelujah!" shouted a number of volunteers.

One little boy said, in his experience with moistened cheeks, "Thank the Lord; before I joined the Salvation

Army I was a bad boy; but now I say my prayers, and am trying to be good, and mean to get to heaven! Amen."

One little girl, with tears in her eyes, said, "Before I joined the Salvation Army I used to be a naughty, bad girl; now I am praying to God, and try to be good. O Lord, do save my poor mother, and my brothers and sisters, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen." A number of girls and boys related their experiences in similar strains. One grey-headed old man, with wet eyes and trembling emotion, thanked "God that He had put it into the mind of one of the boys in the room to leave him a tract, and to invite him to join the Salvation Army. It was the best thing that had ever been done to him. Instead of serving the devil, who was a bad master, he was serving God, and hoped to get to heaven. Bless God, and the lads and lasses. Amen."

The captain now called on the "band" to strike up one of their "marches," which they did:

> "There is a better world, they say, oh so bright!
> Where sin and woe are done away, oh so bright!
> And music fills the balmy air,
> And Angels with bright wings are there,
> And harps of gold, and mansions fair, oh so bright!"

And

> "The Lion of Judah shall break my chain,
> And give us the victory again and again," &c.

I then wended my way to my lodging at Mr. Atkins', all the better for having spent a couple of hours with the "Salvation Army;" and with good wishes for its success, I dozed away, with a "captain" of the Salvation Army for a neighbour on one side, and a clergyman of the Church of England on the other, feeling sure that between these two good Christian centurion brothers, and under the eye of my Master, I was pretty sure to land safely, after the tossings of the night, at the breakfast table in

the morning. During my midnight wandering in mist and dreamland, the following aphorisms, thoughts, and suggestions floated before my brain.

As the beautiful colours of the field, forest, dell, garden, and bower are produced by the rays of the sun, so are the beautiful traits of Christian life produced by the rays of Divine love, as exemplified and manifested by the Son of God, our blessed Lord.

The nation that allows her children of tender years to drift about at sea without rescuing them from ruin, has decay, or "dry rot," at work among her timbers, and will before long become a wreck.

The country that cannot find time to see to the interest of its little children within its borders, has allowed the devil to throw dust into the eyes of its leaders, to blind them against its happiness and prosperity by leading all into the dark.

Why are some Christians little-loved, weak-kneed, and sickly? Because they, like babies, live on "sop"—*i.e.*, trashy fiction, shows, sights, sounds, and unrealities, instead of the love of God and the pure milk of His word.

When you see a Christian with the love of God burning deadly within his soul, and without either light or heat being the outcome, it may be taken for granted that a lot of worldly ashes are in the way choking up the ventilation and air passages; and if he will not set to work at once to clear out the ashes and dust of sin God will do it for him, either by the chastening rod of affliction or losses and crosses in other forms.

Cloaks of deception and fraud are made out of the fibres of disease and putrefaction, and those who wear them are exposed to the disgust and loathing of all upright observers.

Cloaks of honesty and uprightness are made out of the fibres of love and truthfulness, and the wearers of them

are received with the smiles and loving embraces of all classes of society.

When you see a Christian without either life or soul within him, you may rest satisfied that bank-notes, musty-fusty deeds, or other things upon which he has set his affections, are clinging round and coming across the ventricles of his heart, and unless removed they will cause death both to the body and to the soul. If the earth-bound Christian will set fire to them by exposing them and his heart to a ray of Divine love, he will be able to jump over a mountain and scale the battlements of heaven, and with flag in hand shout, "Victory!"

Some dashing, flashing wicked men are like a balloon without a vent-hole filled with the devil's gas, which expands the higher it rises; and for a time they float upon the surface of humanity, finally seeking pleasure among the clouds of fascination and frivolity; and in this region they burst and come down to earth and their senses with a tremendous crash, to find when it is too late that they have been making fools of themselves, and that their grappling irons will not save them from oblivion and ruin.

A clever, wise, thoughtful, sagacious, and Christian statesman may be compared to an aeronaut, who sits in his balloon-car carried by public opinion and pulling the strings of popular applause. Popular applause is the gas by which a statesman floats in the air above his followers; the cords and netting that hold the bottom together are his friends; the treasury bench is his car and the press his strings, which, wisely handled, enable him to land upon the desired spot. Poor wayward and wrong-doing relations are the grappling irons that hold him to the earth; hangers are paupers, and loafers are his sandbags. Infidels, Fenians, Sceptics, and Communists are matches, fusees, and percussion caps, thrown into his car by disap-

pointed office-seekers and courtiers with the object of sending him to Jamaica before his work is done. When those various elements have either been thrown out of the car, stamped out, or brought under proper control, he will then mount higher and higher till he finally quits his car and finds himself seated by the throne of God.

The best stimulating food for an overworked brain, and containing more phosphorus than a thousand fish, is the essence of Divine love, and grace and truth in equal quantities, to be taken upon the knees as often as circumstances need. Before applying to the Great Physician for this medicine the patient should spend an hour in meditation and solitude.

When you see professing Christian parents setting their children to ferret into other people's affairs, it is a sure sign that they are fonder of rat-catching than filling their souls with good things; and the unwary should be on the look-out, or they will be trapped by these godly rat-catchers and their skins taken to be made into purses.

The various denominations of Christian churches in the country may be likened to an orchard of apple trees, most of which are bearing fruit in one form or other. Some are just beginning to bear fruit, and there are others dead cr dying, while there are some trees producing larger quantities of ripe, healthy fruit. In some cities, towns, and villages the best kinds of fruit are to be seen, and in other places the little hard sour crabs, which almost set one's teeth on edge to look at them, much less to taste. The best and largest fruit in any case is that which grows upon the most healthy trees and branches, exposed to the sun's rays, and draws its nourishment the most direct from the parent trunk. Fruit upon almost dead branches does not so soon get ripe as the fruit upon healthy branches, and it is small and shrivelled up. In some localities we shall see what we may call "Blenheim"

churches, "Russett" churches, "Crab" churches, "Keswick" churches, "Northern Green" churches, "Whiting Pippin" churches, "Winter" churches, &c., growing side by side. The "Crab" church is little, hard, and sour; the "Blenheim" church is rich, large, delicious, and healthy; the "Russett" church is uninviting, but juicy, and much better than it looks. So in like manner with other kinds of Christian churches. The name of the churches answering under these various names must be answered by the members themselves. As digging, dunging, pruning, and grafting improves the trees and the quality of the fruit, so in like manner our heavenly Father has to deal with His churches, or they would all die together. Conscience, surrounded with death-like stillness, asks the question, "To which do you belong?"

A man who has forsaken the path God has marked out for him has stuffed his ears with wool, and jumped upon the devil's steam tug, and is being taken into a long, dark, dark tunnel, with no light at the other end; and the light of heaven and the gospel which he has left behind him are, through distance, smoke, and steam, and his own bad actions, getting gradually less. The only light he can see, and which will not help him to grope his way in his wretched condition, is derived from farthing rush-lights called science, made and placed in the dark watery cavern by men's hands; and these get fewer as he is being pulled along by evil influences, until he is lost in despair, with horror upon his face and wringing his hands in grief he passes away.

As children sitting upon a swing gate rocking to and fro are in some degree being prepared for the storms of a life at sea, so are the little foretastes of heavenly pleasure enjoyed by His children from time to time, filling, preparing, and nerving them for the tempestuous ocean which awaits them.

People without gratitude for God's mercies may be compared to swine eating chestnuts as they fall from the trees. Their refined senses are only manifested in grunts and grumbles. Wise are the people who take lessons from the little birds, and sing God's praises while they enjoy His blessings.

Gamblers are the devil's cats set by his Satanic majesty to catch children and fools, and woe be to those who are caught within their clutches.

Those who cling to forms and ceremonies entirely as a means of getting to heaven, will have their eyes opened some day to find out that they are hugging and fondling an illegitimate child of a parent of a very questionable character. The more they know of the child they have been fondling and its mother, the more they will be disgusted with themselves at having been such dupes and fools.

Those who disobey their parents will find that they are putting a noose round their necks, and tying the other end of the rope to a gate post; and when they have done this the words "love" and "duty" in letters of fire will spring up as from the ground, which will keep getting larger and hotter until the wrong-doers are strangled.

The devil's butterfly is an unconverted clergyman, who gets upon the back of a horse to gallop a fox to death on the week day, dresses in fantastical colours on Sundays, dances before his congregation with incense in his hands, and with his face towards the east, tries to carry his congregation on his wings to a place he knows not where; hypocritically singing the *Te Deum* in Latin as they go from "pillar to post."

Those landlords who object to the cultivation of their waste lands for food for man and beast will find that the scent of the gorse, perfume of the heather, contains the fragrance of the bankruptcy court, with the hares, rabbits,

partridges, pheasants, woodcock and snipe flapping about the doors uttering horrible noises for their folly. The horrors of the court will be increased by hearing the cries of the children asking for bread with none to give.

Those people who, with the aid of a glib tongue, cunning, and deception, are weaving a cloak of soft words to cover a mass of iniquity, will find out too late, unless very careful, that the mass of corruption they have been hiding will burst out with a more horrible stench than that of a dead corpse.

Infidels and sceptics who rest entirely upon science and nature as a lever by which they hope to lift humanity into paradise, have only to look into a bright black earthenware teapot to discover what sort of wry and contortious faces they are pulling before the public.

The most powerful magnet in the world is the love of God. It can draw the sting of the devil, disarm enemies, and lift all the human beings in the universe into heaven. The more it is used the stronger and more powerful it gets.

Sceptics and infidels, seeking for the so-called errors in the Divine Word, may be compared to blind and foot-tied weasels, trying to catch "Jack Sharps" in a broad, deep, clear stream of pure water. They leave their sickening scent on their trail behind them, to be carried forward to be lost in the great stream of truth from whence all our blessings flow.

Children's gifts to children produce more blessed, lasting, and Christ-like results than any other gifts in the universe. Children's gifts to poor little outcast, forgotten, and neglected children are seeds of kindness that will live as long as this world endures, and they will then bloom in Paradise for ever.

Christians who receive their strength for the conflicts and trials of life from reading light books while sitting in drawing-room slippers, and under the sound of frothy

conversation, instead of from closet prayer and faith, and the rain and sunshine of heaven, are like window plants, which derive their strength from cold and poisonous water put to their roots. Plants, whether in nature or grace, grown under such circumstances soon become unhealthy and drooping, and unable to stand the bare breath of opposition.

Christians living upon the church roll in name only, without the cheering and enlivening influence of the Holy Spirit, will become like plants grown in a dark room, pale and feeble. Some Christian lives are weeds, and may be known by their crotchets, tempers, and wrinkles.

The first signs of a withering church may be said to have manifested themselves when the living members extend the dead hand of sympathy to the suffering members of their own flock.

With the seeds of life are the seeds of death, and at the birth of any child the mortal conflict begins, never to result in a "drawn game."

Big Christians, like big plants, require more water than small ones; and so in like manner Christians who have many cares, troubles, business and state responsibility require more grace than little Christians, and those who have it not will soon become bankrupt.

The "will" and "principle" are man's own twin-sisters, the offspring of life, and run side by side through the marrow of man's nature; and who derive their vitality, life, and power from the unseen spiritual influences by which they are surrounded for good or for evil; and every action that tends to cripple either the one or deform the other is soon manifested in the crooked actions of a man's life, shaping immortality.

Crooked Christians, like crooked trees, are neither so profitable nor beautiful to behold as those who grow straight and stately.

Under the guise of an angel of light, Satan dangles false hope before some Christians, as a basket made of finely-wrought and tender twigs, a bouquet of delicate, beautiful, lovely, and richly scented greenhouse plants, as a foretaste of what is before, or in reserve for those who follow his advice—*i.e.*, the influence of the ball-room, theatre, gay living, high life, fashion, and fancy, &c.; and so dexterously does the arch enemy hold these things before the simple ones, or entwine them round their hearts, that they are ready to cry out, "hell" is heaven and "heaven" is hell; and in this way the simple are groping after shadows till they find themselves surrounded by a darkness blacker than midnight, and without a friend in the world, with the devil laughing in their face for having been such fools.

The best antidote against beer and hellish swears is cold water and upward prayers.

To a troubled conscience, at midnight hour the ticking of a clock sounds as loud as the death knell of the church bell.

Every act of good or ill we perform makes an indent upon the coil of future life, which will speak and re-speak to us through the never-ending ages of eternity as they roll along.

Every time a Christian looks at sin with a longing eye, the devil draws a thin beautiful tinted film before his eyes, through which film, in process of time, the fire in his conscience' eye, kindled at the time of his conversion, is unable to penetrate, or see the dangers lying across his path.

Tears of penitence, joy, and gladness are the best eye-salve for those whose eyes are growing dim.

Christians who have to live in and wade through the mud of slander and lying pools of deceit have need to wear watertight boots, of the kind described in the good old book.

By listening attentively to the prayers of a Christian,

you will soon discover whether he wants—like a run-down clock—winding up. Losses and crosses, the death of a darling child, affliction, and a thousand other things, God useth as He seemeth well to wind him up and set him a-going again with fresh vigour.

A man who has a heart full of prejudice, spite, malice, and envy has an extra eye upon his nose, eclipsing his other eyes, which can both smell and see the dark side of a man's character. So sensitive is this nose-eye that it can detect faults and failings when there are none to be detected.

The most lovely Christians are those who, like the beautiful butterfly and charming songsters, live in the sunlight of His throne.

The more miserable Christians are those who, like bats, buzz about in the dark.

Some Christians are like London dogs galloping about the streets after froth, losing their masters, and then they howl out, "Oh that I knew where I might find him!"

When the benevolent action of drawing-room philanthropy ends in nothing but tall talk and carpet gossip, it may be compared to soap bubbles piped forth for show.

Youths receiving their habits, nourishment, character, and stamina from the pothouse and gin-palace may be compared to plants grown in a room lighted and warmed with gas, which sicken and die.

Artificial Christians are like wax flowers, pretty to look upon; but without scent and perfume, difficult to handle, and they will not stand the fire.

Society is like a book of poems, and those members with the most sentiment, poetry, or sympathy in their natures will be the most sought after, prized, and used.

To a man who has done wrong, and has a troubled conscience, a louse upon the window pane appears as an ugly monster.

Conscience is the soul's looking-glass, and blessed is the man who has courage to hold it up to behold what manner of man he is.

A sick room is often God's pinfold, where He places in naughty wandering children; and there they will lie until either our blessed Saviour unlocks the gate or takes them over the top of the walls to heaven.

Authors and their books are like flowers: some are small, but send out a rich fragrance, and may be used as button-holes in the drawing-room; others are lovely to look upon, but as sour as crabs to handle and taste. There are others as large and showy as the sunflower, with a perfume anything but paradisical; and there are others with heavenly virtues running through themselves and their books to such an extent that a child will have no difficulty in gathering sufficient flowers to form a beautiful bouquet; and not a few in this our day are actually poisonous, and dangerous to meddle with.

Strong conviction, the offspring of thought and reflection, is the handmaid of inspiration, and the agent through which this heavenly soul-impelling power works out the Divine ends and decrees of Providence in carrying on the affairs of the world; and those who are heavenly inspired by means of the golden cord of love and sympathy, in full action between themselves and God, may be said to be His cabinet ministers.

The food eaten by an idle man warps his body, stunts his mind, and sends his soul to ruin.

An oak tree, or any other tree which stands the storms with defiance, are those whose roots have hold of mother earth with the firmest grip; and as in nature so in grace. A man to withstand all the storms of life must have firm hold upon the Deity.

A crooked tree may be said to be faulty; and it is neither so valuable nor beautiful as those that are

straight and stately; so in like manner it may be said of the crooked members of Christian churches and social societies.

Some members of the community may be properly called "creepers," for they very much resemble the ivy. They have neither backbone nor principle. Their object is to creep into religious communities and social societies, so as to entwine themselves round the members. They harbour filth, impede growth, hide beauty, and climb by the strength they steal from others.

A church whose members are tipsters may be compared to a marsh with too much water at the roots, bringing forth rushes, sedges, and buttercups.

Upon the tail of a snail a farmer's weather glass is to be seen; so in like manner the footsteps of an enemy will reveal to an observing mind the dangers to be avoided.

Some Christian ministers are like the gas stove, warm-looking in the pulpit, but cold at home.

A man with all sorts of wrong ideas, crotchets, and queer notions in his head exhibits himself as a marsh with spots of green grass and daisies, to get at which mud and quagmire will have to be faced and got through before they are reached, and when this has been done the trouble will have been wasted.

Selfish men and misers engaged in grubbing after mammon may be compared to a swarm of flies feeding upon a dung-heap; and so long as the sun of prosperity shines they can feed, buzz, annoy, and sting.

A man who kisses his wife to hide his sins is sowing seeds that will produce a crop of anguish and despair that will hang heavier round his neck than a millstone. A kissing deceiver is the devil's major-general.

Every time a man or woman does a deceitful action they make and deposit a grain of gunpowder, that only requires the light of public opinion and truth to send the

maker, according to the number of grains deposited, into eternity to reap his folly.

Hungry-bellied politicians, whose object is to sting in order to feed, are the gadflies of English society, settling upon John Bull to fill their pockets and rob for fame.

Paupers and lawyers are leeches which fasten upon social life, often sucking the blood of those who are the least able to stand them.

A wife who cooks her husband's meals five minutes behind time is carving furrows upon his forehead.

A mother who sends her children unwashed to school is embedding in the child's nature seeds that will one day bring a crop of poverty, wretchedness, and despair.

A man who sits playing with his thumbs, hoping that something will turn up to put him upon the pedestal of fame and fortune, is hatching addled eggs, and the longer he sits upon them the worse they will stink.

Infidelity is a thick, muddy canal made by men's hands, the bosom of which is covered with the weeds of idiosyncrasies and Satanic doubts; and beneath its surface it teems with all kinds of big and little, prickly, dead, and dying venomous reptiles; and woe be to the man who trusts his barque upon its stinking and putrefying surface with the hope that it will carry him to the crystal river and sea of glass.

Something of the wonderful infinitude, love, and power of God, in regulating and governing the external and internal relation of myriads upon myriads of millions of worlds teeming with life, variety, and beauty, may be gathered if we can grasp the idea that the separate particles of the rays of light sent forth by the sun to illumine our world each morning are, after they have done their work, whirled into unknown and unbounded space, and transformed as they fly, at a rate faster than imagination can travel, into suns to light up other worlds and other

systems. And yet He finds time to number the hairs upon our heads; yea, a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice. Wonderful! most wonderful! Past comprehension. None can fathom.

As the twelve precious stones—jasper, sapphire, chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius, chrysolyte, beryl, topaz, chrysoprasus, jacinth, and an amethyst formed the foundation of the heavenly Jerusalem, the future home of His saints, with pearly gates, as seen by John the divine in apostolic days; so do hopeful, believing, fighting, wrestling, joyous, singing, patient, benevolent, praying, working, and conquering Christians form the foundation of the present-day heavenly temple, with love and concord as doors, and walls of virtue, wherein God delights to dwell among His children, witnessing adoration with loving eyes, and listening to hymns of praise and thanksgiving with melodious ears.

A man may be said to be in a fog when he cannot see the hand of Providence in all his dealings, or God's finger pointing out his way.

A closet is a burrow into which a Christian who is hounded to death by the dogs of hell can run and be safe. When once there, Christians can smile at their howls and sing while they show their teeth with rage.

At seven o'clock I was unbolting the door, making my way out of the house to a number of gipsy vans in an orchard on the outskirts of the town. On going to the place I met a little *posh* gipsy dressed in "rags and trashes," with the heels—what was left of the "trashes"—upside down. He had just turned out of his bed, he said, and from his bed followed the dog, both having snoozled under the van—in which his uncle and aunt lay—on the ground, with a wet, damp rug as a covering. "Master," said the little *posh* gipsy boy, "can you tell me where I

can get a bottle of ginger beer? I am so thirsty and hungry. I've had nothing since my dinner yesterday." I went with the boy to several houses where "Ginger-beer sold here" was displayed in the window, but without success. I gave the boy the price of a bottle and trotted him off lower down the town to quench his thirst and satisfy his appetite.

The gipsies were just beginning to "turn out," and the little gipsies, half naked, were hunting up sticks out of the hedge-bottom to light the fire to boil the water for breakfast. The men and dogs were collecting together in groups, half-dressed, to relate to each other their successes at the fair. Apart from the rest of the gipsies, owning a van of a better kind than the others, two old gipsies were enjoying their breakfast upon the ground. As soon as the old gipsy woman—whose face betokened that it had figured in many an encounter, and was somewhat highly coloured—saw me, she began to get excited, and called me to them. I thought, "Now is the time for squalls; look out." I drew near to the old woman with a strange mixture of feelings. It was early in the morning. There were now about a score of gipsy men and women looking on, and a few of the dogs came sniffing at my heels. I tried to screw a smile upon my face, and to dig and delve low for a pleasant joke, but it would not come from the "vasty deep." On my approach the old woman jumped up from the ground, and with both hands clasped mine in hers, which felt as rough as a navvy's, saying while griping them tightly, "Bless yer, my good mon, I've wanted to see yer for a long while. I've long 'erd abaut yer, and ha' never had th' pleasure o' puttin' my een on yer till this mornin'. Sit yer down on th' gress, I want to tawke to yer. Dunner yer be freetened, I'm not goin' to swaller yer, bless yer, master mon. Yer'll ha' *sum* brekust, wonner yer?" "Yes," I said, "I did not

mind." Although I did not exactly like the appearance of things, I thought it would not do to say "no," and I knelt upon the damp grass. In a pan over their fiery embers were the remnants of bacon and red herrings. There was only one large cup and saucer, without a handle, for the pair of them. I thought most surely she would fetch a cup and saucer out of the van for me. Such was not to be the case. A group of some ten or twelve working men of Hinckley stood looking over the hedge only a few yards away, at the old woman's "megrims." She handed me in the first place a piece of bread, upon which was some bacon and herring. It took me all the time to swallow this uninviting morsel. I munched a little of it, and some I put into my pocket for another time. She now filled up her cup with tea, and made her fingers do duty for sugar tongs. I could see no teaspoons about, except one that was among the herrings and bacon. This was fetched out and plunged into the tea, and round and round it went, leaving upon the top of the dark-coloured tea—which I could now see by the bright morning sun shining upon the scene—stars floating about. The old woman first drank herself, and then handed the cup of tea to me. I supped and nibbled the crust. I supped again, till between us the cup was nearly emptied. She had a strong scent of "Black Jack," and I kept a very sharp eye upon what parts of the cup the old woman drank from. "Now then to bisness," said the old gipsy. "Yer see none o' we gipsies con read an' write. I'll show yer I con, if none o' them conner. Han yer got anythin' wi yer for me to read?" I had a few copies of "Our Boys and Girls," with me, given to me by the Wesleyan Sunday School Union, and I handed one to the old woman, dated September 1880, and she began stammering at some of the verses in an excited frame of mind between anger and pleasure, as if determined to

read them whether she could or not. "Ha—ha—ha,—Haste traveller—ha—ha,—haste! the night comes on." She got through one or two of the verses pretty well. I then gave her another verse, which she read fairly well:

"He is our best and kindest Friend,
And guards us night and day."

I gave her another verse, but I could see tears in her eyes, which prevented her getting through it as well as she desired. She laid the fault to her being without spectacles. Her reading these lines touched her very much, and she became quite excited again, and jumped up and clutched hold of both of my hands and said, "Yer see, my good mon, if none o' the t'other gipsies con read, I con, conner I? But I con do more than read, I con say a lot o' the Bible off by heart. The Creeds, Church Catechism, Belief, and Sacraments, which I larnt by heart when I was a girl. I went to the Church Sunday School at Uttoxeter. Yer'll see by that I have not allus been a gipsy. When I got married to my old mon I had to go a-gipsying wi' him, and have never been in th' church since. My name's Bedman, of 'Ucheter,' and am well known."

She knelt upon the grass again, and supped a little more of her strong tea. The number of Hinckley working people and gipsies was increasing, and up she jumped again, clutching both of my hands, after which she laid her hand in navvy fashion upon my shoulder, and began to repeat the Creed: "I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God," and on she went to the end in her fashion. After this she knelt down again and began with the Decalogue; "God spake these words and said, I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have none other gods

but me," and with a red face, and tears in her eyes, trembling with emotion, she sung in the usual chanting tone, "Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law." The old gipsy woman went on to the end, to which I responded, "Amen." Some portions of the Litany were repeated, and then she struck off at a tangent into the Catechism, commencing with "What is your name? May Bedman. Who gave you that name? My godfathers and godmothers in my baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. What did your godfathers and godmothers then for you? They did promise and vow three things in my name. First, that I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh. Secondly, that I should believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith. And thirdly, that I should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life;" and then she sung out, "Amen." "Ah!" said the old woman, "you see, my good master mon, I know a little, don't I?" "Yes," I said, "you know a little, and he that knoweth his Master's will, and doeth it not, 'shall be beaten with many stripes.'" "Yes," said the old gipsy, "I do know my Master's will, and I have not done it, and I've been beaten with many stripes during the last forty years, and here I am. Never mind, let bygones be bygones. 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.'" And I replied, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "Yes, you are right, bless you," said the old backsliding gipsy, and with wet knees and wet eyes she sung out again, "Lord,

have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law," to which I responded, "Amen." I then left this penitent gipsy's strong grips, the gipsy gang, and the number of lookers-on to go to my "quarters" for my breakfast. I then spent another half-hour with the Salvation Army. After a pleasant conversation with the clergyman at my lodgings, I started homeward, and on my way to the station I came upon one of my old gipsy families, who were just having their breakfast in a very filthy, tumble-down van, with their six poor ragged, dirty little children squatting about on the bottom of it. The good-hearted *posh* gipsy woman seemed to have lost all spirit in her struggles to live a respectable traveller's life, and was now with her children in the depths of despair and poverty. She would insist on my having a cup of tea as I sat upon the doorstep. I could not drink all of it, but did the best I could under the circumstances. She persisted in pressing me to take a cocoa-nut and a sponge for my little folk at home, the cocoa-nut to eat and the sponge to clean their slates with.

It is from two adjoining villages in the neighbourhood of Hinckley that two of our present-day English tribes of gipsies spring. Many years ago the father of one tribe was a "stockinger"—*i.e.*, one who makes stockings—and he conceived the idea that he would like to be a gipsy. Accordingly he set up a pedlar's "basket of trifles" and began to stump the country. From this small beginning there are now between forty and fifty "real gipsies," as some backwood gipsy writers—who would delight in seeing this country dragged backward into Druidism as a retaliation for their own failure in the battle of life—would call them. Poor little-souled mortals! they are to be pitied, or my feeling of disgust at their wrong-doing would lead me to say hard things about them. To be laughed out of school is a start bad enough in the wrong road in all conscience, without a *severe probe from* me. My pleasure would be to put out the

hand to lead wrong-doers back to the wise counsel of a loving Christian father, the decalogue, and the teaching of Christ.

The success of the first gipsies in their "rounds" led the second lot to take up the "profession," and to-day we have two full-blown tribes of English gipsies in full swing, tramping the country in vans, carts, surrounded in many instances with dogs, dirt, wretchedness, and misery. Sometimes they will be fraternizing with kisses, and other times they will be quarrelling and fighting with each other to the extent of almost "eating each other's heads off." In these two families there will be close upon one hundred and fifty men, women, and children, and not more than three or four out of the whole able to read and write a sentence. It is truly heartrending to contemplate the amount of evil that has been done in the country by these two families of artificially-trained gipsies. Thank God, some of them are beginning to see the error of their ways.

I bade the Hinckley gipsies good-bye, and having dined off a slice of bread-and-butter fetched out of the corner of my bag, at Nuneaton station, I made my way homeward. As I was mounting the last hill on this bright, lovely Christian Sabbath day the church bells were pealing forth—

"Come to church and pray
On this blessed day."

Mr. George Burden, the Leicester poet, author of "The Months," had heard something of the cry of the gipsy children when he was prompted to send me the following touching little poem:—

"THE GIPSY CHILDREN.

"From the remotest ages,
From many a lovely lane,
The cry of gipsy children
To heaven hath risen in vain.

"CHORUS. Then rescue gipsy children,
Who roam our country lanes.
Break off their moral thraldom,
That keeps each life in chains.

"Through many a bitter hardship
Their little lives have passed;
Round them the robes of kindness
As yet have ne'er been cast.

"From city, town, and village
They wander wild and free,
Too long despised, forsaken,
Amid their revelry.

"No influence pure and heavenly
Protects them night and day;
Nor wise and blest instruction
To help them on their way.

"From vice and shame and ruin,
That taint their early youth,
Ye English hearts deliver—
Shield them with love and truth.

"One hastens to their rescue
With earnest heart and will;
God bless the noble mission
Of George Smith of Coalville!"

Rambles among the Gipsies, Posh Gipsies, and Gorgios at Long Buckby.

DURING the Sunday night after my visit to Hinckley I more than once thought that I was about to enter the great unknown and unseen world of *Tátto paáni* (spirits) from whence no *choórodo* (tramp) returns.

After partaking of a light breakfast of the kind *Midúvelesko* (Christ) and *mongaméngro* (beggars) eat, with my *Romeni* (wife), *Racklé* (sons), and *Raklia* (girls) at our plain-fare *misáli* (table), I began with some of "*our boys and girls*" to wend my way through *poovs* (fields) and by-lanes and over rippling streams to Long Buckby. I had not got far down one of the lanes before I came upon a scissors-grinder (*posh*) gipsy, who, together with his *joovel* (woman) and their six *nongo-peeró chiklo chavis* (barefooted dirty children), were *beshing* (sitting) upon *chiklo drom rig* (muddy roadside) *rokering* (talking), *chingaren* (quarrelling), *sovenholben* (swearing), and eating their *shooker manro* (dry bread) for breakfast and *paáni* (water) out of the rippling stream for *múterimongri* (tea). Their *yogoméskro* (fireplace) was upon the *chik* (ground); their *kair* (house) was a barrow covered with rags. Although belonging to Anglo-

térra (England), and priding themselves on being *Gaŭjo-kones* (English), not one of the eight men, women, and children could tell a letter. *Shóshi* (rabbits) were not to be seen, and *kanegrôs* (hares) were out of sight, where they *T'aned* (camped). Rooks were "caw"-cawing overhead; *baúro-chériklo* (pheasants) and *ridjil* (partridges) had flown. After a chat with them I distributed a few pictures and little things to the *chabis* (children), and then bade them good (*saŭla*) morning.

A further trembling stroll by the hedges, ditches, daisies, and buttercups brought me to the edge of the canal, where I sat down to watch the darting, jumping, and frisking of the *mátcho* (fish) as they shot to and fro before me. Every now and again a perch would pop up out of the clear water, as if anxious to have a peep and a game, and then it would, with a whisk of its tail, shoot off like an arrow. The lark was singing overhead. While meditating, musing, and observing upon the surroundings and unregistered and uninspected canal boats and cabins packed to suffocation with uneducated poor canal children, in face of an Act passed—for which I worked *hard* and *long* from 1872 and onward to to-day, to prevent this sad state of things—I began to aphorize, and entered into my pocket-book the following aphorisms:—

Some little-brained, over-sensitive, dwarfish mortals, who spend their time in running after little annoyances, may be compared to a policeman running with his staff after a fly which has been tickling the end of his nose on a summer's sunny afternoon.

A clever man who has found his way into the gutter through his own misconduct may be compared to a piece of granite, with a rugged squarishness about him that would have enabled him to find his upward way into the world and good society; instead of which his ruggedness has been rubbed and kicked off, and to-day he is as a

boulder upon the pavement, and undergoing the process of being kicked from pillar to post, with no reward for him but the gutter.

A man who builds up his fortune out of ill-gotten gains, and the grinding sweat of the poor, is feathering his nest in a dead carcase that will stink long in his nostrils, notwithstanding fine feathers, plausible excuses, and sanctimonious looks.

When present unhappiness is the outgrowth of honest conviction and hard-working strivings, a crop of immortal pleasures will be seen where least expected.

Immortal, golden fame is the everlasting perfume of eternal flowers, grown out of immortal deeds, sown upon immortal soil by unselfish hands, and watered by tears of sorrow shed in trial's darkest hours.

When ignoramuses and fools mistake the artificial light of science for that of the sun, it may be taken for granted that they are in a fair way for having their fingers burnt in the candle.

A shallow-headed trickster, with a hungry belly and an empty pocket, clothed in trickery, wringing the watery drops of sympathy and benevolence from his nature to paint virtuous smiles upon his face to deceive his friends while he lightens their pockets of gold, for which he has never worked, has earned the title of the devil's grave-digger, with *perfidus fraudulentus* engraved upon the buttons of his coat.

Round boulder-stones are awkward things with which to build up new churches, so are the round members of the community, without principle, fidelity, and piety, awkward members of society to found new Christian churches.

A London smoke prevents healthy vegetation, as do London morals and influences prevent healthy spiritual life and vigour.

A loan office is a social whirlpool that has shipwrecked thousands of honest families, and as the little ones have gone down they have cried for help, but there has been none to deliver.

The man to gauge your pocket correctly is a lawyer, for he can tell what filthy lucre you have in it with his eyes shut.

A lawyer's office is coated with birdlime, strong enough to fetch the clothes off your back and keep you riveted to the spot; and then the lawyer, with a laugh upon his face like Solomon's leeches, cries out for more.

As rusty old nails put into pickle produce poison for the body, so do rusty, deceitful old sinners put into social and religious societies produce moral poison.

In the darkest heart, riven with anguish and despair, there lies embedded in the human breast a spiritual vein that only requires one touch of the match of heavenly sympathy to cause it to shed seraphic lustre upon hellish actions, at once transforming them into Divine.

A dandy is fashion's painted sparrow, whose wings will be sure to be clipped, and who will find a final resting-place in the gutter.

A gin-shop is the devil's head-quarters, with the landlord as his recruiting serjeant, and rags as the standard colours of his army.

In all societies the devil has his "gad-flies," whose only mission in the world seems to be to sting and annoy.

Slanderers and backbiters are the cats of hell, with eyes of fire, poison-steeped claws, and tails of blood, running wild, and woe be to those who come in their way.

As the light proceeding from the natural sun produces the seven cardinal colours, viz., red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet, and with a proper mixture of these colours a spotless white is produced; so in like manner with the light proceeding from the Son of God,

the seven cardinal graces are the outcome of His glory, viz., love, joy, patience, faith, meekness, temperance, and charity, which, when blended together in human natures, produce a perfect Christian, reflecting His glory and image.

Imagination is the ethereal unseen car that carries the twin angelic sisters, love and sympathy, through space and matter to visit the darkest and brightest spots of creation as a mission of affection, consolation, reproof, help, and encouragement to every fallen son of Adam.

A mother's prayers are a life-belt that has saved thousands of young men and women from being lost amid the dark storms and wrecks of life, until they have been lifted into the life-boat and carried safe to shore beneath the silver rays of Biblical truth, which the lighthouse of heaven has been shedding o'er the troubled waters dashing against the rocks of land and rugged earth.

As the rose, pine-apple, and other deliciously scented fruits and flowers send forth the best fragrance when clouds are the darkest and lowest, atmosphere the heaviest, and rainstorms flying threateningly about, so in like manner do the most child-like, Christ-like, modest, and heavenly Christians send forth heavenly graces tinted with seraphic splendour when the storms of persecution are flying savagely about, afflictions weigh heavily, and Providence hidden from view.

As the beautiful white snow that flappers and flickers about us in winter appears shapeless and ragged to the naked eye, but when seen through a microscope presents prismatic forms and crystalline beauty beyond imagination, so in like manner the blessings, bounties, and mercies of God do to the eye of sinful nature and a bad heart; but when they are seen by the eye of sincerity, child-like simplicity, and faith, then the beauty and wonderful variety of God's goodness to us are manifested

as they descend with heavenly stillness in our rooms and round our paths.

Children seeking innocent, pure, and moral precepts among wicked street boys and girls, are running bare-legged and barefooted after butterflies in a field of nettles and thistles.

A bed of affliction is the "gridiron" upon which God often puts His children when either their keel or propeller—faith and love—gets out of order. Sometimes when they have been very wayward, and have suffered severely, nothing less than being run into "dry dock"—afflictions and earthly losses—will meet their case.

As pearls and other precious gems can be brought out of the sea only by diving—no magnetic hand of an idle man is powerful enough to cause them to swim—so can a Christian fetch up the much more precious hidden mysteries of heaven by retiring from the world and engaging in closet prayer, and diving into God's wonderful system of Divine love. The gems out of the sea adorn the body, while the pearls of heaven beautify the mind, enliven the soul, put a lustre upon the actions, and illumine the countenance with heavenly radiancy.

As the eyes and nose convey the delicious scents and beauty of creation to the natural man, so in like manner do faith and prayer convey to the soul the fragrance, delight, and beauty of heaven.

A man who seeks to be a philanthropist for worldly fame, with a heart full of pride, selfishness, vanity, levity, lust, babbling, hate, and deceit, has a compass upon his ship out of order. And he may also be compared to a vessel with eight "fo'c'sles" and no "poop," with helm to steer, trusting to his flimsy sails of false hopes flappering in the breeze to guide him to heaven, but sure to run him aground to hell.

The heavenly prayer of earth tinged with grief and

sorrow will become the golden picture of heaven illuminated with joy and tinted with God's radiant smile.

The face of a good man is the best heliograph in the world. The heliograph used in war-time, as a signal, shines best with the brightest sun, while the heliograph produced upon a man's face by love shines best in the darkest hour. Dismal cellars, squalid hearths, wretched garrets and prisons, are good places in which to reflect a radiant splendour that will last for ever.

To get a faint idea of God's goodness and infinite splendour we have only to imagine all the leaves and petals of vegetation, differing in shape and size, teeming with silvery dewdrops of an infinitude of delicate tints, which, as they drop among the flowers of earth, instantly turn into pearls and diamonds of the first water; and while you are picking them up, a doubling and multiplying process is everlastingly going on to fill their places. So God gives, and so are the recipients of His mercies, ever blessed with an infinite number of mercies daily and hourly as we pass along.

After another slow walk I felt drowsy, and sat down upon a mossy bank under a shady tree to rest my bones and wearied limbs. The whistling of the sweet songsters and the bleating of the sheep and lowing of the oxen, together with the lovely summer's enchantments, sent me into a doze with my elbows upon my knees. I had not been long in this position before the meadow appeared as one vast gipsy encampment, composed of tents, vans, dogs, wretchedness, misery, devilry, ignorance, dirt, filth, and squalor. The gipsy men, women, and children were playing, singing, preying, banging, shouting, fighting, thieving, lying, swearing, poaching, cheating, and fortune-telling to their hearts' content. Among this vast concourse of English gipsy heathens, there were not a few "spoony" Gorgios, and

"*posh* gipsies." At one side of the meadow there was a gipsy tent covered with rags and old sheeting. There were several little lost gipsy children playing about it on the grass. Near them stood two gipsy women talking to two silly young ladies, and telling their fortunes. The young ladies, of course, were both in love with fair gentlemen, but the fair gentlemen would prove deceitful and dark gentlemen would take their places; and they would marry well, after crossing the water, and become rich, and have a number of children, who would become dukes and lords, and would live and die rolling in gold and splendour, with horses, carriages, and servants to wait upon them "hand and foot." One of the young ladies, with glittering wealth hanging about her, would have much trouble and many disappointments before she realized her wishes, but all would be removed and made right as time went on. One of the old fortune-telling wicked hags, who could not read a letter, took out a small pocket Bible, and pretended to read a few verses. The old gipsies made a few signs, repeated some gabble, and looked into the hands of the young ladies, and told them to come again, as they had something of great importance to tell them the next time, which would add much to their happiness, beauty, and pleasure; but before the secrets could be successful they must bring the best and most valuable ring they had in the house for her to make crosses with, so that she might rule her planet properly and dispose of the fair man, who was haunting one of them to make her his wife, but would bring her to ruin. To the other young lady an old gipsy woman said, in a kind of snake's whisper, "You, my dear young lady, have living with you in your family a fair woman and dark man; they don't mean you any good. You must have nothing to do with them; be sure and hear what I say. Now mind, you must not listen to what they say, or it will be your ruin, and all my

words of counsel will turn to curses." "But," said the young lady, "there is no fair woman or dark man in our house, except my father and mother." "Well," said the old gipsy, "hear what I have to say. Your father and mother are no friends of yours. Now mark that; good-bye, my sweet girl. The Lord bless you, my dear girl. I shall see you again soon; good-bye. Be sure and bring the best ring in the house. Good-bye, and may the dear Lord bless you. If you can bring two rings it will be all the better for your happiness and fortune. The young gentleman who will be your husband will never be cross. He will always be smiling. He will be beautiful, and he will let you go where you like and do what you like. Bring two rings for your own sake. Good-bye, my darling child. I wish I stood in the way for a fortune and happiness as surely as you do; but all depends upon you bringing me the rings. Good-bye, my sweet child. If you can bring me a spade-ace guinea, or a Queen Victoria sovereign of the present year, it will be all the better. I can influence the planets so that you can have your dear charming little husband, horses, carriages, and footmen to wait upon you earlier. The planets will do anything just now. Good-bye, my sweet darling child. You are so much like your dear aunt; she was one of the prettiest and best ladies I ever knew, and it would be a thousand pities for you not to have a good husband. Bring the two rings, and the guinea or sovereign, and it shall be all right. Good-bye." "But," said the young lady, "I have not got any diamond rings and sovereigns. They are my father's and mother's." "Never mind. Hear what I say; you must bring them if you want to be happy. I'll influence the planets to send your father and mother," said the old hag, closing her fist, and with fire in her eyes, and a devil's anger in heart, and frowns upon her face, "more in their places of greater value to them. The

planets will not be ruled, my dear young lady, except by the rings that your father and mother have worn; and the sovereign would be all the better if taken out of either your father's or mother's pocket. The gold and rings of your mother have the most influence with the planets."

After the young ladies had gone, the woman winked at me with a twinkle, and said, with her arm raised, "Don't you spoil my game, and I will bless you. If all goes on right we shall have lots of money the whole of the winter. If you do spoil my game, I—I—I will curse you to death; to death will I curse you, and shall call you a vile wretch for ever; to death you shall be sent."

While this was going on, a little bird was singing in the trees overhead, which caused the old gipsy woman to look up at it and me, and in a softened voice said, "What does it say?" I said, "If you could but read it rightly, it says, 'Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.'" This seemed to startle the old gipsy, and she vanished into the crowd.

Among the crowd of gipsies I noticed several gipsy men clustered together. In the centre of the group there was a dead sheep. Sticker said to Nobbler, "How did you come by it?" "Never mind," said Nobbler. "I've got it and that's enough, but I may as well tell you a little. I went round the villages a few miles away selling some pegs and skewers, and just outside one of the villages there was a large lot of sheep in one of the fields in prime condition, belonging to a farmer who, they say, is a sleepy sort of a chap, and will never put any of the bobbies upon your track. I conceived a liking for one of the sheep. I knew Goggle Fletcher would be passing by the end of the field in which the sheep were with his cart; and so I hung about in the public-house in the village till it was dark. I entered the field through a gap, and drove them into a dry corner. I kept upon the tufts of grass as much



A SCISSOR-GRINDING GIPSY. "SCISSORS TO GRIND."—*To face page* 207.

as I could, so that I could not be traced. I was not long before I made short work with one of them. After this I dragged him to the ditch by the side of the road by which Goggles was to pass. I lay in the ditch for a long time. It seemed as if he never would come. At last about eleven o'clock he came. I could tell the sound of his trap. On coming up to me I bawled out in a soft voice, 'Goggles, Goggles, step down. I've got something for you. It will be a treat for Sunday's dinner.' 'Is that you, Nobbler? What! You've been up to it again, have you? You will have the "long wools," if they are to be got, without either love or money.'" Goggles jumped down and helped Nobbler to lift the sheep into the cart, and off they bowled, arriving in the meadow about one o'clock in the morning. Gipsies always take their plunder far away. The skin was buried, and they set to work dividing the carcase among their kith and kin.

Another gang had been out on a poaching expedition with their lurcher dogs, and brought to their tents and vans some hares, rabbits, and pheasants; these were also divided. Among this vast gipsy encampment, numbering some hundred men, women, and children, I saw an aged couple of gipsies with some of their grandchildren round them. The old woman had learned to read the Bible a little, and she was telling the children to be good and love God. She was the only one who could read among the gipsies, except a few riffraff Gorgios, who were studying gipsying with a view to leading an idle vagabond's life, free from parental restraint and elevating social influences.

In the camp I noticed a *posh* gipsy "scissor-grinder" from one of our alleys, and his gipsy wife; every few minutes he bawled out, "Scissors to grind!" "Scissors to grind!" While he was grinding away at his knives and scissors, his wife was stitching umbrellas and "minding her baby."

I found that the man had had a good education at a high-class school, but had taken the "wrong turning," and now spent part of his time in "scissor-grinding," singing gipsy "slap-dash songs," and during the short days of winter "dotted down" gipsy love tales, &c. He had smudged thickly over the soul-saving golden letters embedded in his memory in the days of childhood —as all young men and maidens do who take to gipsying —the fifth commandment: "*Honour thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*" Poor fellow! I felt sorry to see his dirty knees through the rents in his breeches. In his childhood he had been taught by his Christian parents to lisp as he knelt with his head bent low against his mother's knees—

"Teach me to live that I may dread
The grave as little as my bed."

"I lay my body down to sleep,
Let angels guard my bed."

Now he could sing out with his wife's assistance—more jovially, of course, than Hubert Smith sung it on his tramp to Norway—

"My father's the king of the gipsies—that's true;
My mother, she learned me some camping to do.
With a packet on my back, and they all wish me well,
I started up to London, some fortunes for to tell."

Or more touchingly than Esmeralda sung—

"Shul, Shul, gang along with me;
Gang along with me, I'll gang along with you."

How much better it would have been for this scissor-grinding *posh* gipsy if he had followed the advice that had been given to him, and endeavoured to lead the poor lost wanderer upon right paths to heaven instead of to hell.

A gipsy's charges for "grinding" and "setting" a pair of scissors vary from twopence to two shillings and sixpence; all depends upon circumstance and who owns them.

Posh gipsies and others who encourage gipsy wrong-doing know it to be misleading and evilsome; but it does not answer their purpose to speak faithfully and truthfully about gipsy wrong-doing. Gipsy idleness, gipsy frauds, gipsy cruelty, gipsy filth, gipsy lies, gipsy thefts, gipsy cheating, gipsy fornication, and gipsy adultery, are looked upon by all enlightened Englishmen and Christians as sins to be avoided and not to be encouraged. And he who encourages the gipsies in this wrong-doing is an enemy to the State, an enemy to God, an enemy to Christianity, and an enemy to himself, for which he will be made to smart some day. Their ill-gotten coin will burn their pockets and singe the hair of their head with terrible vengeance.

To come again to the things I saw with my eyes shut while lying under the shade.

Among the hundreds of gipsy children in this vast camp who were going to ruin there were a few fast-goers, fools and fops, fraternizing with the "gipsy beauties," but no hand was put out to help to save the children from woe. The "*gentlemen*" were too busy to soil their hands with the poor ragged, forlorn, neglected, forgotten, and forsaken gipsy children. They might live like heathen and die like dogs. A thousand things must be attended to, and the souls and bodies of the gipsy children might go to hell for aught they cared.

Occasionally a gipsy child in this camp would begin to sing; but, as Elton Summers in the *Christian World* Magazine for 1877, says—

> "More plaintive and low is its melody,
> Till, faint with its own sad reverie,
> It sinks to a whisper and dies."

As I lay, I noticed a man, apparently about sixty years of age, with grey hair, round features, and a load upon his back, coming through the gate into the meadow. The nimbleness and elasticity of his step had well-nigh gone. His clothes were ragged and worn. He staggered along, and as he began to move among the gipsies they began to add to his load. Sorrow had furrowed his cheeks and a paleness was upon his countenance. Every few minutes he seemed to hesitate and stop, as if going to put his load upon the ground, in order to move more quickly among them, and into a resting tent at the edge of the meadow.

During one of his standstills I heard him with tears in his eyes saying to himself, "Shall I put the load down? Yes, I think I will;" and then he summoned up strength and courage and said, "No! no! I won't put it down till I've either carried it to where I want to carry it or die in the attempt."

Presently he staggered and fell heavily with his burden upon the sod. He lay for a few minutes without any one noticing him. After he had lain for some time a crowd began to gather round him. Some said, with a chuckle and a grin, "He's dead, thank God! We've done with him, thank God! and hope he has got into a warm place." Three or four gentlemen pressed through the crowd to look at the old man; and as they were going among the bystanders I heard them say to each other, "If he shows signs of life we will give him a lift, but if he is going to die we will have nothing to do with him. Let those see to him who like, we will leave him to his fate, be it rough or smooth." Like the priests and Levites of old, they went on the other side.

Among the crowds in the ditches I noticed an old *posh* gipsy woman from South Carolina Street, with basket in hand picking up wasps, newts, and weasels. One of the gentlemen noticed what she was doing, and questioned

her as to her movements and intentions. She replied as follows, "You will see what I am going to do with them when I have gathered my basketful. I hold in my pocket a bottle containing some mixture that when once it is applied to the basket will cause them to buzz, sting, and poison fearfully. For the matter of that a few others will help to do the same thing; and when this is done I am going to empty them upon the poor devil's head to either poison or sting him to death. Several here tried to do it before, but they were fools and did not go the right way to work." One gentleman said, "Has the poor fellow ever done you any harm or wronged you in any way?" "Well, I don't know that he has, but I and a few others want to see the end of him."

She filled her basket, and applied the mixture to the wasps, newts, and weasels, and just as she was going to empty them upon the head of the poor fellow, about dying, they turned and settled upon her own pate, and away she went out of the crowd, and I have not seen her since. By the side of the poor fellow lay a small bag of seeds which were to grow bread, clothes, and comfort, which a few friends had collected to help the old man on his journey. It was not long by the side of the old pilgrim before up stepped a little dodger who had taken to gipsying, named Philip Lamb, from Russia, who seized the small bag and off he scampered. The last I saw of him was that he was tramping the country with patches upon his breeches.

While this was taking place, three or four other gentlemen—real and not shams—appeared upon the scene. For a few minutes they looked and stared at each other, as if at a loss to know what it all meant, and what the old man had done wrong. "Oh!" said one and another and another, "it will never do to let the poor fellow die in this way;" and they at once set to work to lighten his load,

and to give him some nourishment. After treatment of this kind for a little time, he began to come round again, and smiles were to be seen upon his face and the faces of his friends.

Through one of the gates leading into this gipsy encampment I saw running post haste a number of well-dressed young men and women of respectable appearance, who were making their way to three or four men from the Ionian Isles, who had disappointed society and society had disappointed them. One man stood upon a little hillock, piping forth, in slap-dash gipsy songs, backwood novels, boshy stories, and gipsy lore, the beauties, delights, and loveliness of gipsy life in a way that caused a shivering, aching pang to run through my system from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet. He continued to tell of the pleasure of white lies, and taking things that were not your own; and also in feeding upon things, whether birds, beasts, fish, or game, that lived in the water that God gave us, or upon the grass that He sent us. "God," said these gipsy sensualists, "knew nothing of gates, fences, locks, keys, bars, and bolts." These poor misguided young folks listened with open mouths, and in the end they went into the gipsy tents. They doffed their cloth, put on gipsy garbs, tanned and washed their faces in walnut water, and sallied forth into the crowd cadging and begging, lying and stealing—as only gipsies can.

Among the crowd of gipsies farther away there were two or three real Romanys who had "begun to serve God," and were distributing tracts among the gipsy children, at which the scissor-grinding *posh* gipsy turned up his nose.

On a little mound stood a little man with a *posh* gipsy woman by his side, telling those round him that gipsies were angels who had been wafted from India to our midst

by the heavenly breezes of the Celestial City, and that their ragged and tattered garments were the robes of Paradise, and whatever they did, however dark and evil, was done under the influences of the good spirit of gipsydom. One little sharp-eyed gipsy fellow, named Deliverance Smith, from Kaulo-gav (Birmingham), called out to the *posh* gipsy, "Sir *posh* Gorgio, do you mean to say that these old rags I've got on have been made and put upon my back by angels; and that when I swears, tells lies, fights, and steals, a good spirit has told me to do so? because if you do, I say it is a lie, and know better than believe your tale." The *posh* gipsy called the little fellow to him and said in a whisper, "I don't mean what I say, but I must say something to fill people's mouths. These girls round me are fond of a "lark," and I like them. I know nothing about the other gipsies. Keep your mouth shut, and here's sixpence for you."

In some of the tents diseased *bálano-mas* (pork) was being cooked; in others, *hotchi-witchi* (hedgehogs), *kanê-gros* (hares), and *bouris* (snails).

Some of the poor children had never been washed for weeks, except in walnut-water, which, by continual using, gives them the artificial olive hue amateur gipsies admire. Those who are sunfreckled are the hardest to tan. For a time the sunfreckles are seen through the artificial sickly yellow colour on their faces and hands. Some of the children told me that they never undressed. The healthy appearance of former-day gipsies is fast passing away, and now, as a rule, they are pale, thin, and sickly-looking. Many of the adults and children were much pitted with the smallpox scars. They wore their clothes till they dropped off.

Outside the encampment stood a number of my friends looking on the scene, a list of whom will be found in my "Canal Adventures by Moonlight" (p. 125), with recent

additions since of a number of warm-hearted friends to the cause of the canal and gipsy children.

Some few of the gipsies in this encampment had been married, and that was the only time that they had ever been inside a church; not one gipsy, young or old, had ever been inside a school of any kind. Schoolmasters and ministers were almost unknown to them. They had more acquaintance with policemen and jails than churches and chapels.

Connected with one of the gipsy camps of ragamuffins, I noticed in the distance a tall, thin, unwashed, and emaciated girl of about fourteen winters—it had been nearly all winter with her. The upper part of her thin frame of skin and bones was dressed in a few shreds of rags, and these were not sufficient to cover her bare, dirty bosom, which almost looked the bosom of a skeleton; and on her feet were odd and worn-out, cast-off drawing-room shoes, quite equal to the sad emergency of letting as much mud and water upon her soles as they were to keep the poor lost creature "high and dry" out of the muddy surroundings. She moved among the gipsies with a "trash, trash," and a most downcast and haggard look of despair upon her face. "Despair" seemed to come with terrible vengeance and prominence out of every word, form, movement, and gesture; except when occasional relapses stole over her, and then the tear-drawing sympathy shone and darted like darts of fire that pierced into the marrow of my soul, bringing the flush and blush to my face, and tears to my eyes, whether I would have them or no. No amount of "screwing up," or "bottling," prevented this appearance upon my cheek. The poor girl had fine Grecian features, with long, black, flowing hair, but it was matted together with dirt and filth. With her arms uplifted, and her hands buried scratchingly deep in her hair, she turned to look in the direction where I lay. This was

no sooner done than, a flash of hope lighting up her thin face with smiles through her tears, she started to run towards me as fast as she could, calling out, "My father! my father! my father!" Before I had time to turn round she was at my side, and had planted a kiss upon my cheek. For a moment I was dumbfounded. I said to the lost *posh* gipsy child, "What is it you want, my dear? I am not your father." At this reply she looked wild and almost like a maniac, and said, with her face buried in her hands, "I thought you was my father who had come to fetch me out from among the gipsies." And then she looked again into my face and said, "Arn't you my father? my father was so much like you. He had white hair like you. Arn't you my father? I wish I could see my mother. Will she come for me?" I asked her to sit down by my side, and to tell me who she was. She came a little nearer, and began to tell me how it was she came to be among the gipsies. I will give her tale as she related it to me:—

"When I was a little girl about four years old, I remember my mother sending me for some milk to a house near to the old General Baptist Chapel, Church Street, Deptford,* and while I was going down the street some dark ragged women—the same you saw me with—asked me to go down to the bottom of the street to look at some fine things, and on the way they gave me a penny and some apples and a little doll. After walking a long way we did not get to the bottom of the street, but we got among a lot of children living under a cart cover by the side of the hedge. They asked me to sit by the fire that was on the ground. I said I wanted to go to my mother. It

* It is said that Lord Beaconsfield in his youthful days attended the place of worship to which the poor girl referred; and it is also stated that the bones of one of Cromwell's generals lie smouldering in the dust within or near the sacred precincts. Extremes meet sometimes.

was getting dark, and I began to cry. They kept saying that they would take me to my mother, and at night they all got into a cart, and said they were taking me home to see my mother, father, brothers, and sisters. We went a long way, and the way they took me was not like Deptford, and I have not seen my mother and father since." The girl began to cry, and said, "I should like to see father, mother, Polly, and Jim. It is a long time since I saw them. We used to go to school together, Jimmy, Polly, and myself. My father used to take me by the hand to school and chapel on Sundays, and they did sing such nice hymns. I have seen father and mother cry lots of times. Father used to say his prayers every night and morning. They don't say prayers where I live now. Will you take me to my father and mother? When will you take me? Take me now, and I will give you everything I have in the world. Please don't go and leave me, and I will give you twenty, thirty, forty, and fifty kisses. I will give you hundreds if you will take me to my mother and father. I hope they are not dead. I hope Polly and Jim are alive. Will you take me, please, sir?"

I told the poor little creature that I could not take her, but that I would send three or four gentlemen for her shortly. At this she began to sob out loudly, "Take me! take me! don't leave me here!" I directed her to pray to God for deliverance, for there seemed to be none from earth; and with her eyes turned up to heaven she said with Sir John Davis:

> "Lord! hear my prayer and listen to my cries,
> Let not Thy gracious eye my tears despise."

To which I said, Amen!

Large numbers of them had been in jail. Their short cropped hair and other symptoms told the black tale.

All the vans, tents, &c., were not to be reckoned as teeming with human wretchedness, squalor, dirt, filth,

and sin. Some ditch and mossy bank abodes were as clean as the circumstances would admit of, and the tent and van dwellers were healthy-looking, plump, and clean.

A terrible row commenced among the gipsies over a dog, which ended in bloodshed and murder. Right up at the far corner two men were digging a hole about two feet six inches long, and twelve inches wide, and two feet deep. After it was dug a woman stole stealthily along with a heavy parcel in her arms, covered with a cloth, which might or might not have been a dead dog. As the gipsy woman carrying the mysterious bundle approached, one of the men withdrew to act as a kind of spy guard. For a few minutes he looked about, and then called out crouchingly, and in a loud whisper, "The skies are clear." The woman ran with death in her arms, the devil in her heart, and a hellish glare upon her features, and deposited her load in the cold, cold ground without a tear or a sigh. No mournful *cortége* or funeral knell told the tale of what was going on. Within three minutes all was levelled up, and the three departed—where I don't know; at any rate, I have not seen them since.

Immediately after this sad event I saw coming down the by-lane a School Board officer, a sanitary officer, and a Christian minister. I watched with longing eyes to see what they were going to do. They came nearer and nearer, till they arrived at the gate leading into the meadow. For a few minutes they stood at the gate, which was locked. I liked the looks of them. They looked like brothers of mercy. Their countenances were heavenly. I felt that I could have shouted "Glory." I hastened to unlock the gate, and the brothers of mercy walked in to lift the children upon the path leading to heaven. Just at this juncture a thunderstorm came on, and the dripping from the leaves overhead woke me up. For a few minutes I did not know where I was, whether in the body or out

of it. Feeling as Anna Shipton felt when she wrote in the *Sword and Trowel* for 1871 :—

> "Thou knowest my way—how lone, how dark, how cheerless,
> If Thy dear hand I fail in all to see;
> Bright with Thy smile of love my heart is fearless
> When in my weakness I can lean on Thee."

I pulled myself together to deal with sad, terribly sad, facts, and continued my walk to Long Buckby, my mid-day reverie in the land of shadows, lying between dreams and visions, being over. On mounting the hill leading into the town I met with a tall old man dressed in a pauper's garb, and with a "few slates off." He said he had lived in a cottage with the windows nailed up for seventy years. I asked him how old he was. He answered, "Over seventy." He next turned the compliment upon myself, and said, "How old are you?" I said, "Fifty-one." "Oh," said the old man, after looking at my once black hair, which my friends tell me is now growing snowy white in the cause of the children, hastened by the bleaching of hard struggles, conflicts, and fightings, "you are older than me; I thought so." I said "I did not think so."

There are some quaint, ancient-looking houses in the town, evidently of the time of the Commonwealth. These are built of stone at the bottom, mud in the middle, and brick at the top, and they are thatched with straw and end in smoke. In the centre of this "radical town," peopled with good-hearted folks, stands a very strong, tall, oak pole, some eighty feet high, with a crown upon the top of it, which pole was taken many years ago out of Earl Spencer's park at Althorp. It is known by the name of "the coronation pole." The original "coronation pole" was put up when George III. was crowned, and was cut down in William IV.'s time, owing, as one of the very old townsmen said, "to his turning Conservative." A man named Hare, whom I had a chat with, helped to saw it

down with a "cross-cut" saw. It was sold publicly for two pounds, and the money spent in drink in a public-house opposite. The present pole stands some twenty yards from where the former one stood. The massive crown upon the top of the pole is similar to the one worn by our blessed and noble Queen, and long may it remain.

In the square, and beneath the shadow of the "coronation pole," were some six vans, &c. In three of the vans there were eighteen children of all ages and sizes, seven men and women. None of the children could tell a letter, but three of the men and women could read and write. One of the travellers, the father of six of the children, had received his education at the Bedford Grammar School. With these good-hearted people I had some tea, and they gave me a cocoa-nut to take home for my family. I gave the children some pictures and a few articles of clothing for one or two or three of them, and then wended my way among the feasters and fair-goers. In the "feast" there was a woman with a "rock stall," who had been a Sunday-school scholar, but was now gipsying the country with her two sons. They slept under their stall at night. She said she thought that God did, and believed He would, answer the prayers of backsliders before any others, to which I said, "Amen; He does and will." I left her with tears in her eyes for a gossip with Mr. "Flash" and his dark-eyed, sharp, business wife, who with steam horses and shooting galleries are making money fast, so that they may "retire in their old age." Mr. Flash's life, struggles, and various vicissitudes present plenty of material for a backwood gipsy novel of the blunder-bosh kind.

Flash and his wife were just having a ham tea, and they invited me to join them, which of course I did, and rubbed my hands quickly with delight. It was a prime cut, the frizzling and frying of which brought water to my teeth and a smacking of my lips. I was served with tea out of

one of their best old china cups, which was a treat every one had not the pleasure of enjoying. After my gipsy rambles I thoroughly enjoyed the late tea. They showed me their beautiful feather bed at the end of the van, and unbosomed some of their successes and some of their trials and hardships. I gave them a few pictures, which they said they should have framed. They then filled my bag with "prize onions," and I shook hands with them, to meet again some day, perhaps at Bagworth or Barleston, in Leicestershire, where Flash first saw daylight.

Not one of this batch of *posh* gipsy travellers raised a murmur against my plan for bringing about a free education for the gipsy and other travelling children, and the registration of their vans.

Just under the glittering crown and "coronation pole" stood what, so far as the underworks indicated, had been once an old fish cart, over the top of which had been placed some half-barrel hoops, covered with old tarpauling sheets. The outside woodwork consisted of pieces of orange boxes, packing cases, &c., and was daubed over with paint little better than a child would daub a pigstye door. The dirty patches and blotches of glaring colours were laid on in an infinitely more zigzag fashion than the trailmarks of snails and worms. The creaking *door* was hung with pieces of leather; in fact, the whole outside, together with the pieces of old leather straps, and string-tied-together harness, old rags, buckets, and boxes underneath, presented a sight that I shall never forget. All this family of Y——ks wanted to make them perfect gipsies was that they should pick up some gipsy slang, Romany, learn how to eat hedgehogs, snails, and diseased pork, tell lies, gabble out fortunes, poison fowls, choke pigs, throttle sheep, take all, by hook or by crook, they could lay their hands upon, wash their faces in walnut water, roll about in mud and filth, smoke and eat "black jack," and adopt the gipsy names of

Smith, Lee, Boswell, Hearn, Lovell, Fletcher, Simpson, Draper. With these gipsy traits brought out they would be enabled to live a roving, lively, idle time of it to their hearts' content. So say some gipsy writers. What a contrast, I thought, as I saw some young ladies standing at the window of a large house looking upon the scene only a few yards away. There a piano, played by gentle, nimble fingers, was sending forth sweet notes of heavenly, charming music sometimes at a galloping pace, and at other times as the gentle murmuring of clear rippling waters over bright and glossy pebbles, echoing love upon earth and peace and good-will in the air, turning the widow's sorrowful tears, the business parent's troubles and care drops, into silver stepping-stones leading onward and upward to heaven. For the life of me I could not help showing my weakness by lifting up my eyelids to make room for the scalding tears that wanted to force their way down my cheeks. The wide chasm there is between human happiness and heaven and human woe and hell is something horrifying and horrible. Would to God that our sensual, sensational, and degrading backwood gipsy writers could be brought to see the mischief they are doing by dragging the poor lost gipsies and other travellers down to utter ruin, body and soul, for all time and throughout eternity, by their damning, poisonous writings.

Inside the van, on the doorsteps, and upon the shafts of their old tumbledown cart, there were man, woman, and five children. The father and mother could read and write well, but not one of the children could tell a letter, although of school age. The eldest girl of fourteen was the picture of beauty, though terribly thin from the crown of her head to the soles of her feet; but alas, alas! a few rags, ignorance, exposure, poverty, dirt, and wretchedness were trying to do their best to spoil it. The other children, so far as I was able to judge, were equally pretty. Owing

to my not being an amateur gipsy, a backwood gipsy slang and book writer, of course I do not set myself up as a connoisseur in these matters. The father was inside the old van stirring the boiling "rock," which was in an old saucepan upon a little six-inch square stove similar to what I have seen in cobblers' shops before now. He was a big strong man, apparently capable of any amount of work. The rags of bedding were grimy, greasy, and dirty to the last degree; in fact, soap and water did not appear to have been brought to bear upon anything in the wretched hole. How man, woman, and five children could sleep in such a place is a mystery. God grant that it may be soon solved by the hand of our legislators, philanthropists, and Christians of every grade.

The owner of this travelling van was an engineer and "fitter," and could, if he followed his employment, earn over two pounds per week. One hundred and seventy pounds was paid by his parents as an apprenticeship premium for him to learn the trade; but, sad to relate, it was ending in his boiling "rock" upon the top of a stove in the midst of dirt and filth. This precious dainty, composed of flour, sugar, treacle, and grease, was to be dealt out by his wife and children by halfpenny-worths to little successful popgun firers. What an occupation and ending for a tradesman in possession of strength, sense, and reason! He had been well brought up by Christian parents, but got among loose company, whose chief desire is to be unshackled and free.

The little gleam of light in favour of his future reform was that he seemed to be ashamed of putting his head outside the van. His conscience was not quite dead. May the thundering voice of heaven ring in his ears till he cries out as the poor prodigal did, and once more settles down again in the neighbourhood of Thirsk.

The woman had been a parlour-maid for three years in

the family of R——, at Sowerby Bridge, in Yorkshire, where this family hails from. She seemed a hard-working woman, and one who tried hard to make her way, but possessed with an idea that she should like to see some of the London gipsies. No doubt by this time she is making her way there.

The hardships this poor woman and children had to pass through during the last year are most heartrending.

During the whole of one month, with occasional assistance of the father, they had pushed their van about Lincolnshire in the depths of dark, cold, cold winter. They had no horse, and they presented a too wretched spectacle for daylight travelling.

After their day's work of popgun-firing and "rock"-selling at fairs, feasts, and races they put one or two of the little children who could not toddle alongside their van to *bed*—and bed it was—and commenced crying, pulling and hauling their van up hill and down dale till they got stuck fast at one of the Lincolnshire towns. By begging, cadging, and starvation the woman managed to scrape two pounds and some three or four shillings together, and off she started by rail from Heckington to Spilsby fair to buy a horse. She had left the children without a morsel of anything to eat. Every penny had been screwed and scraped together to make up the two pounds. She wandered about the fair all day, but could not succeed in buying a horse for two pounds. The horses were being gradually driven off the ground, the poor woman had had only a dry crust to eat, sat down and began to cry; in fact, while she was telling me her sorrowful tale of hardship and suffering, tears rolled freely down her face, and she kept breaking out in sobs and "The Lord love you" many and very many times over, with such an effect upon my poor self that I had but little rest that night. I was quite unnerved, and emptied my pockets of what little money I

had among the poor little *posh* gipsy children. While the woman was sitting in her sorrowful fix a man came up to her and asked her what was the matter with her. The poor creature unbosomed herself, and told him. They both there and then began to hunt up the old horses left in the fair; finally they met with one for two pounds—the grey old pony they had with them standing by the side of the cart when I saw them—and an animal it was, such as one does not see every day for bruises, humps, and hunches.

At four o'clock, with darkness creeping on, and a halter upon the pony's head, she commenced to tramp, dressed in rags and trashes, and almost an empty craw, from Spilsby back to Heckington, a distance of between thirty and forty miles. Fortunately there was a little moonlight for a good part of the night, which enabled her to get upon the pony's back to see the guide-posts. Several times she took the wrong turning where there was no guide-post to direct her, but by perseverance righted herself again. The pony was a little lame, and she could not ride, and on they tramped together, occasionally resting by the road side as the silent hours of the cold winterly night quietly and leisurely passed into the future unseen and unknown, except such of it as has been revealed to us by the Great Creator Himself. About two o'clock the next day she arrived at the van door with her old grey pony, and since then they have travelled hundreds of miles together, sometimes pushing, and sometimes pulling along the lanes of life. I asked her if she was not afraid to travel along the lonely lanes and roads leading to Spilsby at the midnight hour. She answered, "The Lord love you, I should at other times, but I did not feel a bit afraid on this night. I wanted to get home with the pony and to see my children, and this kept me a-going forward. Since then," said the poor woman, "we've had a hard time of it; in fact, for the last two

years we've had only six pennyworth of meat, and six pennyworth of bacon in the van. We live on what we can pick up, but chiefly on dry bread and tea." She told me herself that for more than a fortnight together she had on only an old dress, a chemise in shreds, and a pair of old boots to move among the fashionable and gay at the fairs, races, and feasts. Thank God for the hope that dwells within the breasts of these at the bottom of the social scale that brighter days will come. Her little girls had not been undressed and washed for weeks, as they had nothing else to put on while they were being washed; and in this way many thousands of English men, women, and children are drifting into damning English gipsy customs, sins, and degrading and depraving habits, beneath, and encouraged by, the smiles, winks, and gabble of our backwood gipsy, gem collectors, and sentimental and sensational writers, who do not care a straw for those whom they are enticing on to ruin, so long as the gold and silver bits drop into their pockets.

It is time we roused ourselves, and, with Mr. Ellis in the *Quiver* for 1878, cried out at the top of our voices and in prayer from the depths of our whole souls—

> "Oh, help them, then, if ye are men,
> Stretch out thine hand to save.
> Let them not sink beneath the brink
> O' the surging ocean wave."

Rambles among the Gipsies. Upon Bulwell Forest. At the Social Science Congress, Nottingham.

"Not all in vain good seed I sow,
As up and down the world I go;
Scattering in faith the precious grain,
And waiting till the sun and rain
Of heavenly influence bid it grow."

Rev. Richard Wilton, M.A.
Christian Miscellany, October, 1882.

SUNDAY morning, September the 24th, was most lovely and delightful. The buzzing and darting bats were not to be seen. They had retired among the ruins of old tumbledown walls, creaking doors, and thatch. The horrible sneaking rats had crept into their holes, ashamed of daylight. The owl had retired to a dark, dusky nook among the perishing barn stone walls, to sleep and fatten upon its ill-gotten carrion and the tender bones of the sweet chirping, variegated songsters that had been unfortunate enough to come beneath its ravenous clutches. The bright sun was shedding its light, tinged with a little of the autumnal golden hue, upon our rough, rugged, and antiquated dwelling. The robin seemed more proud than ever to

show its beautiful red breast, and to get ready to pipe forth the praises of Jehovah from the branches of the old yew trees near the orchard. The swallows were darting by our windows, as if nervous about their long flight, and anxious to have as many peeps at us as possible before bidding us good-bye for their long journey far, far away. Our fowls had, according to their usual custom on Sunday mornings, gathered themselves together under the shed in the yard to listen to the intonation of their friend "Tom." The sheep and cattle were grazing in the meadows, and sheaves of golden corn stood upright in the fields, inviting the farmers to carry them home to fill the barns of the rich, the coffers of the banker, the empty bellies of the poor widow, toilers in the field and brickyard, dwellers in canal-boat cabins, and gipsy tents, vans, and wigwams. Our village church bells had begun to ring, and my wife was, of necessity, breaking the Sabbath by restoring with her bodkin and thread some of my habiliments while I stood bolt upright, so as to make me presentable at court, which process caused a twitter among our "olive branches." I now scraped together all the money I could, and with my "Gladstone bag" in hand, containing among other things my Sunday's dinner, consisting of a slice of bread and butter and an apple, and my seedy-looking overcoat, turned the best side towards London, I started to the station. The bells were chiming and pealing soft and low, and our little folks were tripping off to church with their curls dangling down their backs, and dressed in their best "bib and tucker." On the way I came upon an Irishman sitting upon a stone minding some sheep that were munching grass by the roadside. For his companion he had, as the Rev. Mr. Vine says in the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, February, 1877,

> "Naught but the sky, the rough-hewn rocks,
> Green belts of grass, and fleecy flocks."

To me it seemed as if he had a small crucifix in his hand, and was counting beads; if so, I interrupted him by calling out "Good morning," to which Pat responded, "Good morning, yer honour; an' it is a fine morning, yer honour." I left him in his devotion, and next came upon a couple of dirty shoemakers from Daventry, with as much watercress in their arms as they could carry, stolen from the water-brook close by while the farmers were in church and the dogs tied up.

I now ran against a youth from the station who was gathering blackberries. At his feet, in the hedge-bottom, a hare was quietly nestling. Poor fellow! he let his blackberries fall to grasp the hare, which allowed him the moment's pleasure of catching its tail, but, much to the chagrin of the youth, did not leave it behind, forcibly illustrating the case of the dog in Æsop's Fables crossing a plank with a piece of meat in its mouth, which it let fall to grasp the shadow. "Oh!" said the flushed youth, "I nearly caught it."

In the train there were several gentlemen. One was reading the *Christian World*, and another was reading a sporting paper. At Nuneaton I had two hours to wait for the next train to Leicester. The interval was spent in pacing backwards and forwards upon the platform, and in eating with a thankful heart my Sunday's dinner, which, not to say the least of, was not too rich for my digestive organs.

I fared better than an old gipsy woman, Boswell, who, with her daughter-in-law—a gipsy Smith from London—and their five poor half-starved gipsy children, came to our door recently. The old woman, Boswell, had only an outer old frock upon her, with two or three old rags underneath. She had no "shift" on, as she said. This family of travelling gipsies consisted of two men, mother and daughter-in-law, and five children, the whole of whom

"slept under their tilted barrow" at Buckby wharf in a hedge-bottom. Not one of this lot could tell a letter.

At Nuneaton I conversed with a gentleman who gave me a little of his history, some of which was remarkable, especially that part relating to his courtship and marriage. "Ah!" said my friend with a tone of sadness, "I had the misfortune to lose my wife by cruel death, and was left with four little children to get through the world as best we could. It was a sad blow, sir. I don't know whether you have ever undergone such a trial, but my experience of it is that it is one of the greatest misfortunes that can ever befall mortal man, and I've nothing but pity for the man who has had to undergo the sad loss. Oh! it's terrible, sir. After you have been toiling hard all day in the cold rain, frost, and snow, and then to go home to find no one to warm your slippers, or to speak a kind, soothing, and cheering word to you, was more than I could bear. To sit and eat your bread and butter and drink your tea alone, while the servants and the children were playing in the streets, was enough to turn any man into a wild animal." I said to him, "Certainly it is a terrible ordeal, and one that I should not like to pass through." "Yes it is," said my friend, almost in whimpering tones. "Well, how did you get out of your sad difficulty?" I said. "Well, sir, things went on for some months in a path in which there seemed nothing but vexation. The servants were quarrelling, the children were neglected, and bills seemed to be coming in without end; and while I was brooding over these things one afternoon, in came a minister from Derby, and he saw the fix I was in, and that I could not get him as nice a cup of tea as formerly; and, to help me out of my difficulty, he said, 'My dear brother, when the proper time comes, I know where there's a wife that will suit you.' 'Do you?' I said to my ministerial friend. 'Yes,' he said, 'I do.' At this I

pricked up my ears, and he said, 'I am going to their house for tea next week, and if you like you shall go with me.' 'All right,' I said. Nothing more passed that evening on the subject. During the week he wrote to me, asking me to meet him at Derby station. Of course I thought I would go; they could not take anything of me, and I went. In going to the house I began to get into a nervous stew. On the way my friend said, 'Now there are two sisters in the house living with their mother. It will be the one with a blue ribbon round her waist who I think will suit you. After they have been in their room to dress for the afternoon she generally comes out the first.' 'All right,' I said, 'I'll keep my eyes open.' At the door the mother met us, and gave us a hearty welcome. The young ladies were in their room, and I was playing with my fingers upon the arm of the sofa. Presently a young lady came downstairs. Of course I had my eyes upon the waistband, to see whether it was a blue one; but, to my astonishment, it was green. In a few minutes the other young lady came downstairs with the blue ribbon round her waist. I concluded that this was the one my friend the parson had selected for me. Tea was got ready, and instead of entering freely into the general conversation, I kept looking first at one and the other of the young ladies at tea, and playing with my fingers between time. When tea was over and the service ended, on the way home my friend the parson said, 'Well, which of the two do you like best?' 'Oh!' I said, 'I'm not particular; I'll take to either of them; but as the eldest is nearer to my age, I think I will make love to her,' taking it all as a joke. Nothing more was said. During the next week I was a long way from home on business, and I ventured to write to Deborah, telling her who I was, and what little game I was up to, and asking her to meet me at the station to have a chat together on the subject.

about which I wrote. The young lady was, so I've been told since, dumbfounded, and said to her sister, 'Of all the men in the world I will not have him; I don't like him a bit. He did not at all seem to make himself comfortable at tea. I shall not go to meet him.' 'Well,' said the other sister with the green waistband, 'If you don't go I shall. He will suit me.' 'Well,' said the one with the blue waistband, 'if he will suit you he will suit me, and I will go to meet him at the station.' Accordingly I got out of the train, so that she might know me again, and on we went to Derby and made matters square; and—would you believe me, sir?—in three weeks from that time we were married." I said, "Well, bless me!" The rapidity of his courting expedition almost took the wind out of me. The station bell now rang. I jumped into the train, and as I was moving off towards Leicester I bade my new friend good-bye; and he, in return, waving his hand, said, "I will tell you the rest another day, and what we saw on our wedding tour in London, Antwerp, Brussels, Mastricht, Rotterdam, and Amsterdam." "All right," I said, and we puffed away, leaving quite a pother behind.

In the train were two young female "school teachers," who had been a "gipsying" to Coventry by the "special" from Leicester on the Saturday afternoon, and, whether by accident or design, they had been left behind. I questioned them about the suspicious circumstance attached to such a course, to which they replied, "As soon as we arrived at the station, and found that the train had been gone five minutes, we nearly cried our eyes out. Fortunately we had friends in Coventry with whom we stayed all night."

I told them to be good girls and do better for the future, to which they replied, "We will," and I left them to make my way down Belgrave Gate to my sister-in-law's. [redacted]ent to St. Mark's church, and heard a

smiling young curate, the Rev. A. F. Maskew, preach a good, practical, telling sermon, on the occasion of returning thanks to Almighty God for the success that has attended our army and navy and the termination of the war in Egypt. The Rev. C. B.—— was away on his holiday. After the service the congregation stood up and heartily joined the choir in singing, "God save the Queen." To which I responded with all my heart, "Amen! God bless our blessed Queen."

Right always comes right. After service I took a walk, with "a young lady" of some forty-five gentle summers and hard winters at my left side, to visit the new park in the abbey meadows. The sight was most enchanting. Few lovers were on the walks with their arms entwined round each other's waists. The artificial lakes, hills, and rockeries were seen with solemn grandeur by the aid of distant lamps. The moving murmuringly forward of the "soar" waters beneath our feet, as we stood on the bridge, lighted up with silver streaks of distant lamps, and the pealing forth of the soft, heavenly, riveting, and mesmerizing hymns and chimes of the evening bells of St. Mark's and St. Saviour's, made me feel that all the troubles, trials, opposition, misrepresentation, and hardship I had passed through were suddenly transformed into pleasures, leading up to the indescribable panoramic views that appeared before my vision. As it passed away—or, I should say, I passed from it—another one opened up which led me on and on in spirit to the heavenly rest and everlasting beauty in store. The Rev. Richard Wilton says—

> "Let Nature's music still the ear delight,
> And gracious echoes mortal cares allay,
> Till "wood-notes" 'mid angelic warbling cease,
> And "church bells" ring us to eternal peace."

In a few minutes after this I was between the sheets,

and I could have said with John Harris, as sleep stole gently into my room—

> "Hark! What is that? The spirit of the vale?
> Or is it some bright angel by the lake?"

And the last I remember was, I was muttering over "by" "by" "the" "lake," "by" "by" "the" "the" "lake," "la— la," and I was bound fast to the bed.

A quondam friend bade me "good morning," and then jumped into a "first class" to recite his "R's" and "S's" so as to give them the finishing touch correctly the next Sunday morning, while I enjoyed the honour and pleasure of a "third." We arrived together at Nottingham, and I made my way to a "temperance hotel," not half a mile from the station, with "first-class" appearances outside, but with "third-class" bedroom accommodation. My room was a "top back," overlooking well-known old friends, viz., bricks, tiles, terra-cotta, sanitary pipes, encaustic tiles, &c., with a board in the corner covered with oilcloth for a washing stand, and a tea saucer for a "soap tray." The bed was hard, and the blind was of a material that needed no washing; in fact, the room was bare, cheerless, comfortless, and cold. I strolled into the market-place, and was soon talking to some old-fashioned Staffordshire gipsies with short skirts, and apparently, thick legs, heavy boots, with plenty of colour about their "head-gear," who, taking all things into consideration, were not bad specimens of gipsies of the present day.

After this I spent a short time with my old friend, Mr. William Bradshaw, a name which has been well known in the midland counties for many long years. Writing and gossiping consumed the remainder of the day; and at ten o'clock I mounted and climbed nearer heaven to rub my eyes again at peep o' day. Between four and five o'clock I was in and out of my hard bed a

dozen times, guessing the time and groping in the dark, for fear I might miss the train to Bulwell Forest. At last I got so fidgety that I was determined to get up, "hit or miss." I dressed, and then went downstairs to find my way out into the street; but, not having an angel, like Peter, to open the doors for me, I had to ring and ring and shout sufficient to awaken all in the house; if they had been as deaf as posts, I could not have had a greater difficulty to awaken them. At last the landlord made his appearance with his shirt on, and his hair on an end like a frightened ghost. Owing to my early movements, and being a suspicious-looking customer, I had to pay my bill, and out I went about half-past five. My train started for Bulwell at six o'clock, and at six thirty I was among the gipsies upon the forest. There were four vans full of gipsies of all sorts and sizes, just turning out of their "bed;" so dirty were they that I should not have been surprised if the "beds" had run away with them. "Smiths" and "Winters" were the two prominent names. "Bless me," I said, there are "gipsy Smiths here, there, and everywhere." "Yes, you are right, my good mon," said Mrs. Gipsy Winter in a Staffordshire twang. In the four vans there would be twelve adults and eighteen poor, rough, dirty, neglected little gipsy children, not one of whom could read or write. The policeman said to me, "The gipsies that come on this forest and about these parts are a rough, dirty, bad lot, and no mistake. Nowt comes amiss that they can lay their hands upon, I can assure you." I had a chat with Mrs. Gipsy Winter, and told her what my object was, viz., to bring their vans under registration, and also to give their children a free education; to which she replied with delight, "Lor, bless you, my good mon, I'm reight glad you big fokes are going to do sommat in the way o' givin' *our* childer a bit o' eddication, for they're nowt as it is.

They are growin' up as ignorant as osses; they conner tell a "b" from a bull's foot. I conner read mysen, but I should like our childer to be able to read and write. Han you got one o' your eddication pass books wi' yer? cause if yer han, I'll ha' one." I told her that the Act was not passed authorizing the use of them; at which she held down her head, and said, "I suppose we mun wait a long time fust." "Yes," I said, "it will not be this year."

Mrs. Gipsy Winter had upon her finger a Masonic ring—*i.e.*, a ring with the "square" and "compasses" engraved upon it. Of course I felt sure she was not a Freemason, and did not proceed to put her to the test. There never was but one woman a Freemason, and the reason was that she secreted herself in an old clock case while the ceremonies were being performed in the Lodge "close tiled." The only way out of the awkward difficulty was to make her a Mason forthwith on the spot, and this—so Masonic squib and report has it—was done. This report of "our Masonic sister" is to be taken with a pinch of snuff.

I called to see a family of gipsy Woodwards who have taken a house and are settling down the same as other folk. Those of their children that are able to work are working at the coalpits close by, and the children of school age are sent to school. In the course of time they will become as other workers, helping on the welfare of the country, and at the same time securing their own comfort and happiness. The house did not present the appearance of a fidgety old maid's drawing-room, but they are up the first steps towards it. Time and encouragement will bring it round in the sweet "good time coming." "Wait a little longer, boys; wait a little longer."

It is complete bosh, nonsense, wickedness, and misleading folly for frothy novelists to say that it is impossible for gipsies to settle down to industrious habits and a

regular life. I know full well they can, and are willing, many of them, to settle down, if means be taken to bring it about. I will only mention one case, to illustrate many others, viz., a gipsy I know well, who is as pure a gipsy as it is possible to find at this late day. The good old man has had a settled home for forty years, and goes to hard work night and morning amongst the farmers, the same as other labourers do. Aye, and many times he works late and early, dining at times off a crust and a cup of cold water with a thankful heart in the week-day, and sings God's praises on Sundays.

To come back again to Bulwell Forest. After I had visited the Woodwards I turned into a small coffee-shop to get a cup of tea; and while I was enjoying the penny cup of tea with a halfpenny's-worth of bread and butter for my breakfast, the landlord said: "One of the young gipsy rascals of the forest came into my shop last week, and made himself too friendly and free with some things that lay upon the table, for which I could have put him into jail; but I did not like to follow it up, and the lot of them have made themselves scarce since." Another old woman, a seller of the *Nottingham Daily Journal*, *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, *Express*, &c., said, "The gipsies often come into my house and want to tell me my fortune; but I always tell them that I know it better than they can tell me, and will have no cotter with them."

I next came upon a gipsy named L——, who told me of a case of gipsy kidnapping which took place at Macclesfield a year ago, viz., that of a gipsy woman stealing a pretty little girl of tender years out of the streets, belonging to a fairly well-to-do tradesman living in the town. Although the child was advertised for a long time, and large rewards offered, it was not to be found, till one day a gipsy girl went to one of the shops in Macclesfield to sell *some gipsy* "clothes pegs." The good woman of the house

came to the door. Although five long years had passed away, tears had been dried up again and again, and hundreds of prayers had gone upward to Him who hears prayers and sighs, and the child had grown big and brown, and was dressed in rags and filth, the mother recognized the poor gipsy child standing at her door hawking "pegs" as her own dear little darling "Polly." Without waiting for the lost child to be washed, dressed, and its hair combed, she embraced her darling little lost daughter covered in rags with fond kisses, which told a tale through the gipsy dirt upon the child's face, as only a tender-hearted, loving mother can, and straightway called in her friends and neighbours, and said, "Rejoice with me, for I have found this day my long-lost little darling Polly." A policeman was sent for, the kidnapping gipsy woman was traced, and was sentenced to eighteen months' hard labour in jail for her wrong-doing.

I was also told of gipsies who are undergoing long terms of penal servitude for horse-stealing, their favourite game—sheep stand second on the list. Donkeys are very low down upon their list, as they are not worth "shot and powder." "If a gipsy should get 'nabbed' for stealing a donkey, it would be looked upon in the eyes of the bobbies," said my gipsy friend, "like stealing a horse."

A whirl, twirl, puff, and a whiz landed me upon the platform in the "Health Department" at the University College, Nottingham, September 26, 1882, with my bags, books, and papers, among the large gathering of Social Science magnates and doctors, to discuss—firstly, the Canal Boats Act Amendment Bill of 1881, which I am humbly promoting; and secondly, "The Conditions of our Gipsies and their Children, with Remedies." Among others upon the platform there were Mr. Arnold Morley, M.P., Mr. W. H. Wills, M.P., Mr. Whately Cook Taylor, Chairman, one of Her Majesty's Chief Inspectors of

Factories; Mr. H. H. Collins, Hon. Secretary of the Health Department; Mr. J. Clifford Smith, Secretary to the Social Science Association; and in the body of the hall there were Dr. Hill, the Medical Officer of Health for Birmingham; Mr. Walter Hazell, Mr. Russell of Dublin, and a large gathering of ladies, "too numerous to mention."

I had expected to find a large opposition force confronting me, consisting of those who would keep the canal and gipsy children in their present degraded condition; but, like the Midianitish host, the breaking of my cracked pitcher had frightened them out of their wits, and they had scampered off to the hedges and ditches to skulk in front of me again another day. No doubt with my papers, Gladstone bag, spectacles, &c., I presented very much the appearance of "Mrs. Gamp" at her speechifying table.

These are my papers with all their faults and living seeds, sown and planted at the Master's bidding, in the midst of much toil, hardship, and persecution; which seeds will bring forth a little eternal fruit some day—maybe, when my work is done, and I have been called home to rest with the little ones.

The Condition of our Gipsies and their Children, with Remedies.

In the year 1514 the gipsies landed in Scotland from the Continent, and from that date to the present time we have had in our midst over 30,000 men, women, and children with increasing numbers, going to and from our villages, towns, lanes, and fairs, and mixing with the simple, wise, gay, and foolish, leading the lives of vagabonds, demoralizing all they have been brought in contact with, by their lying, plundering, dirty, filthy, cheating, and crafty habits. In one word, the gipsies have been, and still are, a disgrace to Christian civilization. Of course

there are exceptions among them, and I wish from the bottom of my heart that there were more.

They live huddled together regardless of either sex, age, or decency, under hedges, in tents, barns, or on the road-side, with but little regard for marriage ceremonies.

Their food, in many instances, is little better than garbage and refuse, and the most riff-raff of them bed themselves upon rotten straw.

We have also, at this late day, with sunny education gleaming on every hand, over 30,000 poor gipsy children of school age growing up as vagabonds, and not two per cent. of the whole able to read or write a sentence.

If our present-day gipsies had been of the romantic type of some two or three centuries ago, as pictured to us so beautifully by fascinating novelists, we might have wandered down the country green lanes, and by the side of rivulets, to admire their witchery, colours, and gipsy traits, exhibited with much refined skill, artistic touch, and feeling by gipsy writers; but the fact is, to state it plainly, the romantic gipsy of novels and romance has been dead long ago, and neither the stage, romance, nor imagination will ever bring him to life again in this country.

Our gipsies of to-day are neither more nor less than ignorant, idle tramps, scamps, and vagabonds. This I know full well, for I have found it out over and over again, not by hearsay, but by mixing and eating with them in their wretched abodes often during the last five years.

My sorrowful experience of them forty years ago, with casual acquaintances since, and onward to 1878, has not brought any traits of their character, as practised by them, that any sane-thinking, loyal, or observing man can admire, and the sooner our legislators deal with our gipsy vagabonds the better it will be for us as a nation.

Many of the gipsies have large hearts, and are most kindly, and they are also clever and musical. These features of gipsy life I have witnessed myself many times. The cause of their degraded position may be laid at the door of our Christian apathy, legislative indifference, social deadness, and philanthropic neglect.

The flickering and uncertain efforts of missionary agency will do something towards reclaiming our poor lost wandering little brothers and sisters, but not a tithe of what the social, sanitary, and educational laws of the country can do.

In the paper I had the honour to read before this Congress at Manchester, in 1879, I dealt more especially with the evils of gipsy life, only referring briefly to my remedy, the substance of which I have published in my "Gipsy Life," and in various forms since 1878, and onward to this date, which, with additional suggestions, are as follow:—

1. I would have all movable or temporary habitations registered and numbered, and under proper sanitary arrangements in a manner analogous to that provided under the Canal Boats Act of 1877.

2. Not less than 100 cubic feet of space for each female above the age of twelve, and each male above the age of fourteen; and not less than 50 cubic feet of space for each female under the age of twelve, and for each male under the age of fourteen.

3. No male above the age of fourteen, and no female above the age of twelve, should be allowed to sleep in the same tent, or van, as man and wife, unless separate sleeping accommodation and suitable ventilation be provided.

4. A registration certificate to be obtained, and renewable annually at any of the urban or rural sanitary authorities in the country, for which the owner of the tent, or van, shall pay a sum of 10s., commencing on the first of January in each year.

5. The compulsory attendance at day schools a given number of times of all travelling children, or others, living in temporary or unrateable dwellings up to the age required by the Education Code, which attendance should be facilitated and brought about by means of a free educational pass book, procurable at any bookseller's, for the sum of one shilling, as I have suggested to meet the case of canal children.

6. The children to be at liberty to attend any National, British, Board, or other day schools under the management of properly qualified schoolmasters.

7. No child under thirteen years of age to be engaged in any capacity for either hire or profit, unless such child shall have passed the "third standard" of the Education Code.

8. No child or young person to work for either hire or profit on Sundays under the age of sixteen.

9. Power to be given to any properly qualified sanitary officer, School Board visitor, inspector, or Government official, to enter the tents, vans, shows, or other temporary or movable dwelling, at any time, or in any place, and detain them if necessary, for the purpose of seeing that the law is properly carried out.

10. The Local Government Board to have power to appoint one, or two, or more officials to see that the local authorities enforce and carry out the Act; and also to report to Parliament annually.

11. All fines to be paid over to those authorities who enforce the Act and the regulations of the Local Government Board.

12. As an encouragement to those gipsy wanderers who cannot afford to have healthy and suitable travelling vans and other abodes, and who desire to settle down from their wandering and degrading existence to industrious habits, the Government should purchase common or waste

lands, or allot lands of their own to the gipsies in small parcels upon a long lease—say for ninety-nine years—at a nominal rent.

With these features embodied in an Act of Parliament, and properly carried out by the local authorities, under the supervision and control of the Local Government Board and Education Department, gleams of a brighter day might be said to manifest themselves upon our social horizon, which will elevate our gipsies and their children into a position that will reflect a credit instead of a disgrace to us as a civilized nation.

> "And shall he be left in the streets to roam,
> An outcast live and wild?
> 'God forbid!' you say. Then help, I pray,
> To provide for the [gipsy child]."
>
> Rev. I. CHARLESWORTH, *Sword and Trowel*, 1871.

The Canal Boats Act of 1877, *and the Amending Bills of* 1881 *and* 1882. By GEORGE SMITH, of Coalville.

In 1877 an Act was passed entitled "The Canal Boats Act of 1877," on the basis sketched out by me in a paper I had the honour to read before this Congress, held at Liverpool in 1876; and also in my letters, articles, &c., which have appeared in the leading journals, and in my works since the passing of the Act and onward from 1872 to this date.

After the Bill was drawn up, and during its progress through committee in 1877, several features were foreshadowed in the measure which led me to fear that when passed it would not accomplish all we so much desired, and these I pointed out to the late Lord Frederick Cavendish, the Right Hon. W. E. Forster, Mr. Salt, Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board; Mr. John Corbett, M.P., Mr. Pell, M.P., Mr. P. Rylands, M.P., Mr. Sampson Lloyd, M.P., Mr. W. E. Price, M.P., and

many others; but rather than yield to the opposition of the Canal Association, and the loss of the Bill, I suggested that it should be passed, notwithstanding the drawbacks that were in sight.

When Lord Frederick Cavendish, Mr. Price, and others, at the fag end of the session of 1877, put the question seriously to me, as to whether the Bill should not be massacred along with the other innocents, I replied as follows: "Push the Bill through Committee by all means. A piece of a loaf is better than none. It has its defects, but if we do not get the Bill passed this year we shall not be likely to do so next year. Let us get the thin end of the wedge in. The operation of the Act will be to bring about the registration of the canal boats, to give power to the sanitary officers to enter the cabins, to secure the education of the 40,000 canal children, and also to prevent overcrowding in the cabins."

The first step towards carrying out the Act, after five years' continued agitation and visits to various parts of the country, has been fairly accomplished; and the sanitary officers, by the power given to them under the Act, have done good by preventing, in some degree, the spread of infectious diseases; but the main features of the Act, viz., the education of the canal children, the prohibition of overcrowding in the cabins, and the annual registration of the boats, are almost entirely neglected.

The following are the failing points of the Act of 1877:

1. The Act to a great extent is permissive. 2. Proceedings cannot be taken against the boatmen and boatowners for evading the regulations of the Local Government Board—the most important of all. Breakers of this Act can be brought under the lash of the law, but breakers of the regulations cannot. 3. The Act of 1877 is placed in the hands of the local registration authorities to carry out, consequently the expenses fall upon the ratepayers, and

the result is that the local sanitary inspectors, or registration officers, have had but little added to their salaries—in many instances nothing—and with strict orders not to go beyond their town or city boundaries. Thus it will be seen that boats plying between the registration districts, which are as a rule between twenty and fifty miles apart, are left to themselves. 4. Another oversight in the Act is the non-annual registration of the boats, and consequently there have been no fees to meet the expenses. It was intended from the first that there should be an annual registration of the boats. 5. The want of power in the Act to enable the Local Government Board to appoint officers to supervise, control, inspect, enforce, and report to Parliament upon the working of the Act and the regulations. 6. Another cause of failure in the Act has been owing to power not having been given to inspectors to enter the cabins or inspect the boats at any other time than "by day." Boats are more or less on the move by day, and it is only when they are tied up—which generally happens after six o'clock—or when they are being loaded or unloaded, that the local registration officer has an opportunity to see or to form any idea as to what number of men, women, and children are sleeping and huddling together in the cabins. 7. The Act does not give the School Board officer power to enter a boat cabin. The education clauses of the Act have, I might almost say, entirely failed: (*a*) owing to the indifference manifested by the school authorities at which places the boats are registered as belonging to; (*b*) the extra trouble they give to the school attendance officers; (*c*) the facilities given and the chances seized by the boatmen to get outside the town or city boundaries with their children so as to elude the grasp or shun the eye of the School Board officer. 8. The payment of a week's school fees demanded from the children who can only attend one or two days in the week. It is not

either fair, honest, or just to compel a boatman to pay more for the education of his children than others have to pay. 9. Many boats in the coal districts, with women and children on board, travelling short distances, have escaped registration and inspection under the plea that their boats are not used as dwellings. 10. Another very important reason advanced by the registration authorities why the boatmen and boatowners have not been prosecuted for breaches of the Act is that all the trouble and expense attending prosecutions have had to be borne by the local ratepayers, while the fines, in accordance with the Act of 1877, have been paid over to the county fund, instead of the borough or local fund.

The Bill I am humbly promoting, and which has been before Parliament during the last two sessions, supported by Lord Aberdare, Earl Stanhope, Earl Shaftesbury, the Marquis of Tweeddale, Mr. Samuel Morley, M.P., Mr. Albert Pell, M.P., Mr. John Corbett, M.P., Mr. Thos. Salt, M.P., Mr. Thos. Burt, M.P., and Mr. H. Broadhurst, M.P., provides a remedy for these faulty places. 1. I would do away with the permissive features of the Act of 1872. 2. Fines to be inflicted for breaches of the regulations, as well as for breaches of the Act. 3. I give under the Act the local registration authorities part of the registration fees. I propose that the annual registration fee should be 5s. for each boat, one half of this amount to go to the Government, and the other half to the local authorities. 4. The registration of the boats to be annual. This will be a very simple and inexpensive affair, no matter in what registration district the boat happens to be at the time of the renewal. 5. I give under the Bill the Local Government Board power to appoint one, two, or more officials to visit the canals in various parts of the country, and to see to the proper enforcement of the Act, and to report annually to Parliament. 6. I propose that the inspectors

should have power to enter a canal boat at any "reasonable hour." 7. No child shall be employed on a canal boat unless such child shall have passed the "third standard." 8. I propose that children, whom the regulations allow to live in the cabins, should have a free educational pass book, which would enable them to attend any day school while the boats are being loaded and unloaded. 9. No child under the age of sixteen to work on a canal boat on Sundays. 10. All boats upon which there is accommodation for cooking or sleeping to be deemed to be used as dwellings. 11. All fines to be paid over to those authorities who enforce the Act.

When the Canal Boats Act of 1877 is amended in accordance with the lines I have laid down in the Bill, the stigma that has been resting upon the country and our canal population, numbering nearly 100,000 men, women, and children, during the last 125 years, will be in an easy way for removal, without inconvenience or costing the country one farthing, and the boatowners and captains not more than 2s. 6d. each per annum.

With the proper carrying out of the Act the 40,000 boat children of school age, not ten per cent. of whom can read and write, will be educated, and the boatmen's homes made more healthy and happy; industrious habits will be encouraged, and the country will also be made richer by increasing the happiness of her water toilers upon our rivers and canals.

> "Oh, help them, then, if ye are men,
> And, when thy race is run,
> Turn not aside, nor think with pride
> Thy work in life is done."
>
> ELLIS, *Quiver*.

My papers passed off in the midst of smiles and kindly and lengthy *press notices*. Editors have always been more *kind to me* than I have deserved, much more than I had

anticipated. The fact is, I had expected some rough handling, and armed myself with a few little rough, awkward facts. Perhaps it was fortunate for me that the majority of my hearers were of the gentler sex. Bless their dear hearts! Their encouraging smiles and words have helped me through many a difficulty in pushing on with the cause of the children. May God reward them a thousandfold.

The act was ended, and the curtain dropped. I therefore "picked up my crumbs," and bade my friends goodbye till—D.V. and if all's well—we meet again next year at Huddersfield. I then made my way to the station, and home. Upon Leicester platform I met with a few old friends, who had pleasant greetings for me, including Mr. Thompson, Mr. Fox, and a literary friend, the Rev. W. L. Lang, F.R.G.S., who has given myself and the cause I have in hand many lifts—bless him for it. Onward and upward may he travel to the time when it shall be said, "It is enough." And to my many other friends who have helped me by their influence and with their pens, I repeat the same thing over and over again.

My little stock of the "one thing needful" had begun to turn quite modest, and crept into the corners of my pocket, so as to be scarcely felt among the keys of boxes, drawers, cupboards, and lockers, knives, and other pocket trifles. I took my ticket to Rugby, which left me with one shilling. I had not gone far before my ticket was missing out of my hand. I was in a minute "all of a stew." Cold perspiration crept over me. In a twinkle, before any one could say "Jack Robinson," my hands were at the bottom of my pockets using their force to persuade Mr. "Ticket" to turn up; but no! it was not to be found. Fortunately a porter came panting after me and asked if I had not lost my ticket. He had lifted a ton weight off my shoulders, and I thanked him very much. At Rugby I spent my last coin in copies of the *Times*, *Standard*, *Daily News*, *Telegraph*,

Daily Chronicle, and Morning Post. In nearing our old antiquated village along the lovely green lanes, little village children were to be seen gathering blackberries. The sun was shining most beautifully in my face. The autumnal tints and hues were to be seen upon the trees. The gentle rustling wind brought the decaying and useless leaves hesitatingly and in a zigzag fashion to the ground, as if they were loath to leave the trees which had given them birth, before settling among the mud to be trampled upon by tramps and gipsies. While climbing the last hill, with a heavy heart and light pocket, weighed on all sides with nervous hope, trembling doubts, and anxious fears, I never more fully realized the force of John Wesley's hymn, as I tried to hum it over. In soft but faltering accents I might have been heard by the village children singing—

"No foot of land do I possess,
No cottage in this wilderness.
A poor wayfaring man,
I lodge awhile in tents below,
Or gladly wander to and fro,
Till I my Canaan gain."

The first thing that caught my eye upon my library table was a letter from Mr. Samuel Morley, M.P., in which was enclosed a cheque to aid in building a Good Templar hall at Northampton, about which I had written. This was duly sent to Mr. Hollowell, the secretary. Underneath Mr. Morley's letter lay one from a friend, Mr. Frank A. Bevan, of 54, Lombard Street, enclosing a small cheque on behalf of himself, Lord Aberdare, and a number of friends, to help me in my work, and to provide for the daily wants of my little ones, till we arrived at the next stile on our rough, steep, and somewhat zigzag journey. The sight of his cheque sent a thrill of joy through my soul, and I could not help shouting out, "Thanks! a thousand times."

Light again dawned at eventide, and we were enabled to retire to rest singing God's praises as the candle flickered in the socket.

In my "Gipsy Life" I have shown, among other things which have never been mentioned by any gipsy writer before, the following particulars. First, the cause and probable date of the gipsies leaving India; second, the route by which they travelled to Europe; and third, the cause of their persecution after their arrival in England from the continent.

My gipsy paper did not give universal satisfaction to everybody outside the congress. My plain matter-of-fact statements raised the ire of a few little narrow-souled mortals, who had not the courage to appear in their own dress, and borrowed other people's clothes—*shooba Rye*, &c. —to crouch in while they fired their popguns at me. Just as they were trying to swallow my papers, an article appeared in the *Morning Post*, stating that I "knew more than any man in England about the gipsies." This was more than *O Bongo, hó, no tïckno chavo* could stand. Editors are not like most mortals, they have a perfect right to say what they please about anybody and everybody. They and other literary friends have been more than kind to the cause of the children and my unworthy self, for which I thank them from the bottom of my heart. Without their help I could not have got along. I sent the following letter to the *Morniny Post*, bearing date October 11, 1882, relating to "*Shooba Rye*," *O Bongo, hó, no tïckno chavo:*

"Your correspondent complains that I do not know sufficient of the gipsies. My congress papers and my 'Gipsy Life' show that I know a little. It is evident I know more than is pleasant to him, or he would not have hastily snatched up some one else's badly-fitting night-dress to sally forth with his farthing candle in hand to put a 'sprag' into my wheel. Such backward move-

ments are too late in the day to stop the sun of civilization and Christianity shedding its rays upon the path of the poor gipsy child and its home.

"I do not pretend to know more than forty years every-day practical observation and insight into the real hard facts of the conditions of the women and children employed in the brickyards and canal boats, and the dwellers in gipsy tents and vans can give me.

"Two days ago I came upon a family of gipsy "muggers," father, mother, and four children, travelling in a cart. The poor little children, whose ages ranged from four to twelve years, were stived up in a box on the cart, which box was 5 ft. long by 2 ft. 9 in. wide by 3 ft high, or about eleven cubic feet of space for each poor child. The children were all down with a highly infectious disease, carrying it from a village, where it had been raging, to Daventry and Northampton. I gave the children some apples, but the poor things said, 'We are all ill and cannot eat them.' None of these children could tell a letter. These are facts and not fiction; inartistically dressed, I admit, and without the flowers of poetical imagination to adorn them. Knowledge gained under the circumstances in which I have been placed, will, I think, be found nearly as valuable in improving the condition of neglected and suffering children as imaginative, unhealthy backwood fiction spun by the yard under drawing-room influences and by the side of drawing-room fires can be. At any rate, I have tried for many long years in my rough way to look at the sad condition of the women and children whose cause I have ventured to take in hand with both eyes open, one to their faults, and the other to their virtues; and also with a heart to feel and a hand to help, as my letters, papers, and books will show to those who have the patience to read them.

"I have not been content to sit upon mossy banks by the

side of rippling rivulets, with a lovely sun shining overhead, and beneath the witching looks and mesmeric smiles of lovely damsels, swallowing love and other tales as gospel.

"It is time the hard facts and lot of our gipsies and their children—*i.e.*, those travelling in vans, shows, and tents—were realized. It is time we asked ourselves the question, 'What are the vast increasing numbers—over 30,000—of children tramping the country being trained for?'

"The fact is this: Parliament, Christians, moralists, and philanthropists have been content for generations to look at the gipsies and other travellers of the class through glasses tinted and prismed with the seven colours of the rainbow, handed to us by those who would keep the children in ignorance and sin, instead of taking them by the hand to help them out of their degrading position. My plan would improve their condition, without interfering with their liberty to any amount worth naming, considering the blessed advantages to be derived by the gipsies and others from it.

"No amount of misleading sentiment will stop me till the case of the poor children is remedied by the civilizing measures of the country—viz., education, sanitation, and moral precepts—extended to them by an Act of Parliament, as I have described in other places, which could be carried out, and a system of free education established, by means of a pass book, without any inconvenience or cost worth mention. Why should our present-day canal and gipsy children be left out in the cold?"

> "'Tis not the work of force, but skill,
> To find the way into man's will:
> 'Tis love alone can hearts unlock;
> Who knows the Word he needs not knock."
>
> RICHARD CRASHAW, "*Fuller Worthies.*"

Rambles Among the Gipsies at Daventry and Banbury Fairs.

THE eleventh of October, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-two dawned upon "Old England" while rain was coming down too drearily, drizzly, and freely for either man or beast to be comfortable. Foggy, cold, and murky November seemed desirous of making its advent earlier than usual. Not a songster was to be seen nor an autumnal chirp heard round our dwelling. Long dark nights had begun to creep over nature. "The last rose of summer," the Queen of English flowers, was drooping its head and withering up, and the leaves were dwindling down to nothingness. The lanes were strewn with dying leaves which had done their duty nobly and well.

Through the low and heavy clouds the voice and footsteps of children, as they trotted off with their milk tins, seemed to echo in my ears, and other sounds to hover round me, carrying with them a kind of hollow sepulchral sensation, telling me that summer was dead and autumn was preparing nature for the winter shroud, which was undergoing the process of weaving by angelic hands.

The sound of the thresher's flail was heard in the

barn, calling out "Clank," "Clank," "Clank," "Thud," as it struck the corn and barn floor, causing the precious grain to fly like a shower of small pellets against the doors. Not a gleam of sunshine was to be seen. Summer and winter seemed during the last fortnight to have been struggling with each other, in the death-throes of nature for the mastery. Genial summer had to give way to savage winter, and little robins piped forth the victory. Everywhere seemed cold, damp, and covered with melancholy. As we meditated upon the surroundings, our carrier drove to our door with his van, into which I got, and seated myself in one of the corners almost out of sight. A patent "four-wheeler" of this kind I had not been used to, and our little folks did their best to try to persuade me not to try the experiment. We had not gone many yards before eggs, boxes, whiskey bottles, butter, and onions were handed to our carrier for carriage and safe custody to Daventry fair. Fat and thin women were closely packed round me. Welton is a noted village for fat women, which may be the result of the excellent water. While our village blacksmith was putting some of his handiwork into the carrier's van, the scene brought vividly to my mind Longfellow's poem. He might have seen the very spot.

"Under a spreading chestnut tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands."

I mumbled the verse over to myself as we jogged along. To have repeated or bawled it out in such "close quarters" would have been worse than putting one's head into a hatbox.

After the usual "picking up" and "calling" we began

to slowly trot off with our load. We had not got far before our village dames, damsels, and companions began to indulge more or less in the usual village gossip and jokes. Big heavy old women could indulge in sprightly conversation as freely as if they were "four-year-olds." Pleasantry was exchanged as to who was to sit next to our driver, so as to keep his back warm. Village parsons and squires were the first upon the programme. Then came a long rigmarole about the old maids and maidens, poachers, slovens, slatterns, fashions, Jacks, Jims, and Pollies. Everybody knew everybody's business, ranging from the death of Polly Jones's cat to Squire Brown's fine horse. Good masters were passed over with "He's not a bad sort of man to work for, and he'd be better if he had more to do with." Bad masters were mentioned with a curl of the lip, a scowl and a shake of the head, ending with "He's a bad 'un; my man shouldn't work for him at any price, if I could help it." Mrs. So-and-So, and Miss So-and-So were "snappy old things," "niggardly, mean, and miserable;" "nobody has a moment's comfort near them." "Oh!" said one, on the road, "did you see Miss Jenny Starch on Sunday with her new bonnet on? Didn't she look mighty fine? Wasn't she a stuck-up thing? Nobody could come near her with a fork." "Did you see," said another, "the three poor little children running about the streets this morning, almost naked, in rags and dirt? The mother is idle, and the father drinks. They both want horse-whipping, and if I could have my own way I would give it them." "Yes," said another, "and serve them right." "Did you see," said another, "the Misses So-and-So in church on Sunday? They looked quite pretty. When you can just catch them in the right temper, they are so nice and pleasant. What a thing this money is, isn't it? *Money* buys fine feathers, and fine feathers make fine

birds." "Anybody can be made pretty, nowadays, if they have only the money," said a stout dame, who had a big red face under a little bonnet, and must have weighed little short of eighteen stone. We were passed on the road by two "screwy" old maids from Bonnybrook, "trotting off to market" in a green pony carriage, sitting like Jack and Jill, one before and the other behind, bolt upright and as stiff as posts, looking out of the corner of their eyes. As we were mounting the hill going into Daventry the question of "leaving" was brought upon the carpet, and it came out that all of them were satisfied with their "old masters," and were going to "stop again at the old wages." I am afraid their "old masters"—husbands—will have a little difficulty in getting rid of them. They like the "old shop" too well to budge. The process of riddance, "My dear husband," and a stream of tears would have to be faced before they "cleared out."

I had not been long in the "mop" before I was face to face with a good-looking, but somewhat eccentric, and good-natured popgun owner, named Mott, at one of the stalls. One passage of Scripture after another he repeated in rapid succession with breathless speech, until quite a crowd gathered round us in the drizzling rain. After my friend—who has been on the road attending fairs for forty years—had finished his speech, his wife handed to him a newspaper, out of which he read my letter as it appeared in the *Daily News*, bearing date September 5th, 1882, which will also be found in page 161. The newspaper had been given to them by a dirty, wretched, filthy-looking family of travelling show folks from London, whose corns and consciences had been touched to the quick. After he had read it, and had given it to his wife again, I expected a "rather hot reception," especially after a paragraph which has been going the round of a few of the papers, to the effect that I must look out for

trouble from "light and dark gentlemen." As the paper passed from his hands I looked rather anxiously into his face to see what the effect would be. To my surprise, the index of his soul showed pleasure, and not anger; and in unmistakable tones he said, "You are quite right, sir, and I thank you for it. It is rather warm, but your object is right—there is no mistaking that. I quite agree with your plans, and so does every right-thinking man. The traveller's and other gipsy children ought to be educated. God bless you, sir, I know what religion is; I am an old backslider. I was once a leading member among the Baptists, but I chipped out over a little thing, and now me and my old woman are travelling the country in our van, and doing this sort of thing. There is one thing I should like to say, sir; I never creep into my bed in the van without saying my prayers to my heavenly Father. I feel to sleep better after it. It soothes me a little." Tears were making their way down the grey-haired traveller's face; and I think it would have been a blessed thing for him if I could have introduced him into a Methodist prayer-meeting, as a stepping stone that would lead him out and on to the paths he trod in the days of yore, crying out from the depths of his soul, in the language of a writer in the *Christian Life* for October 14th, 1882—

"Thou art a rock, to which I flee;
With all my sins I come to Thee,
And lay them down, Lord, at Thy feet,
Before the shining mercy-seat.
Thou art a fortress strong and high,
To which for shelter all may fly,
Sure there to find a safe retreat,
Beneath the sacred mercy-seat."

After shaking hands with this couple I bade them good-bye, and gave them something to read during the dark hours of winter, something in which are buried seeds of a

bright spring-time for them both, if they will only follow out the directions given. I then strolled into the fair. I had not gone far before I came upon an old brickmaker, and from him I gleaned some facts showing how wretchedly the Brickyard Act of 1871 is being carried out. After chatting with him for some minutes he apparently took stock of my hair, which has, thank God, grown almost white in the cause of suffering children. Mr. Brickmaker turned quite poetical, and in parting said—

> "Take stock, Mr. Knock,
> That's what I have to say, Mr. Grey,"

and he then sidled and smiled away into the crowd.

I had not been long moving to and fro among the gipsies before I learned that two gipsies, whose head-quarters were a few miles from Daventry, were undergoing transportation, one for sheep-stealing, and the other for horse-stealing. The horse-stealing gipsy was caught in his own trap, owing to his being too clever and daring. It came about as follows: A publican and farmer a few miles from here had a fine, beautiful, young black horse, to which the gipsy took a fancy; and it so happened with this gipsy, as with other gipsies of this class, that he had not too much money to spare for purchasing purposes. An old idea ran fresh through his brain, which was, that he could with but little trouble make the horse his own, without money and the bother and trouble of giving back the "shilling for luck" on the completion of the purchase. Accordingly he sallied forth one dark night and took the beautiful animal out of the field, not far from Daventry, and kept it "in close confinement" for three days to undergo doctoring, at the end of which time the stolen horse was quite a different looking animal. The horse now had a white star upon its forehead, and two white fetlocks. Its tail and mane were shortened, and, with the assistance of "ginger," it put on

quite a sharp, frisky appearance. In the meantime he heard that the owner of the horse was much in want of one. "Now," thought the gipsy, "here's a fine chance for turning money over quickly, and getting rid of an animal that would turn 'a tell-tale' if kept too long." Consequently the gipsy mounted his steed, and off he trotted to the publican. On arriving at the door he called the innkeeper out to look at a horse that he had for sale, "good, quiet in harness, sound in wind and limb, a good worker, without a blemish, and cheap." The publican liked the looks of the horse very much, and he asked the gipsy to trot him up and down the road; and off the horse bounded, frisked, and danced about quite lively. The action of the horse was all that was desirable, and the price "right." In the end the horse was sold, glasses round given, the "luck shilling" returned, the horse was put into the stable, and the gipsy became scarce.

Three days after the "white star" and "white fetlocks" were not to be seen, and the horse began to look "quite different."

It was brought plainly home to the publican that he had bought back his stolen horse. The gipsy was "hunted up," tried, and sentenced to a "long term," where horses are not to be had.

In the fair, or "mop," there were eight vans, in which there would be about sixteen men and women and thirty children living and sleeping; and, so far as I could gather, only about four could read and write, and these were adults, none of whom were teaching their children anything that would be helpful to them in after life.

Connected with one of the "Aunt Sally" establishments there were man, woman, and three little neglected children, with no other sleeping accommodation than a "bottom" of straw spread under the stall, covered with an old sheet, *and* warmed in the winter by an oil lamp. The poor

woman was the picture of poverty, despair, degradation, and misery. Their stall and "Aunt Sally" were pushed through the country on a small "hand cart." The family hailed from Leicester, and were in a most wretched, dirty, and ignorant condition. As soon as I saw the man I thought I could recognize his features as those of a *posh* gipsy I had seen before; and it turned out to be true, for he was no other than a "fishman" who had more than once carried my fish to the station.

In the "mop" I came across a man and woman with four children who hailed from a village a few miles from Daventry, and who had taken to gipsying and were singing in the streets in the midst of mud and drenching rain—

"Beautiful Zion, built above,
Beautiful city that I love,
Beautiful gates of pearly white,
Beautiful temple, God its light."

Three of these children were of school age, but could not read or write a letter.

When I questioned the man about putting the children into the union workhouse, and the wrong he was doing to them in bringing them up as tramps, he said "he could not help that; they must look out for themselves as they got bigger, and help to do a little for him." By singing about the streets they got him some "baccer and a little vittles." In 1882 at the "mop" I met with a showman, named S——, and his wife and six children, living in a wretched tumbledown van; the small windows were broken, and rags, dirt, and filth abounded in every nook and corner. The father had had a religious "bringing-up" by Christian parents in Cornwall, and for many years earned a good living in Wales as a miner, and was a member of a Christian Church. The sharp, good-looking woman, although dirty and dejected enough to banish looks and spirits to the winds, waves, and realities of eternity, bore up fairly

well under the wretched surroundings. She had, previous to her marriage, for many years been a "lady's maid" in a good "religious family," and was well educated. The man was ingenious and clever, and had during his spare moments and hours in Wales made the working model of a coal-mine, which, at the instigation of "*religious friends*," he began to exhibit in public. The success that attended him in the first instance led him to think that he was on the high way to a fortune. He acted upon the advice of his "*Christian friend*" and others, instead of his own common sense, and bought a van in which to place his handiwork, and "took to the road." A downhill one for himself and his large family it has been ever since, and they are now gipsying, and cursing the day upon which he took and followed the advice of a shortsighted—to say the least—"*Christian friend*."

In giving advice, God-fearing Christian men and women above all others should look well ahead, and to all the surroundings of the case, before deciding the fate of a family. Advising a parent to break up a settled home and comfortable livelihood to tramp the country among gipsy vagabonds and tramps, I consider little less than murder.

In making their way one Sunday from a village to attend the "mop," they got stuck fast at the bottom of a hill with an old bony emaciated horse that would not draw "a man's hat off his head." The poor little children dressed in dirt and rags, and scarcely able to toddle, had to set to work to drag and carry the old boards, rags, and other things belonging to their "show" to the top of the hill. After hours of toil, interrupted by the constant striking and chiming of church bells on the bright autumn Sunday morning, they were able to make another move.

Their show consisted of the working model of the mine,

one of their youngest children, nearly naked, with a Scotch plaid over its shoulder 'being exhibited as a "prize baby." In addition it included a boxing establishment. The man had not the build and stamina to lead the "ring," and they had to wait for the "millers" to pair themselves before a boxing exhibition could take place.

They had not been in Daventry long before this backsliding showman, who had taken to gipsying, was wanted by *Shórokno gâiro Garéngro* for cruelty to his horses. The result was that he had to "do a month" in Northampton gaol. No doubt the poor misguided showman would feel in his cell as John Harris puts it—

> "Here bees and beetles buzz about my ears
> Like crackling coals, and frogs strut up and down
> Like hissing cinders: wasps and waterflies
> Scorch deep like melting mineral. Murther! save!
> What shall a sinner do?"

To which I would have answered—

> "Pray to thy God
> To help thee in thy trouble."

A week or two after I saw the woman and her six children in a most destitute condition. I gave the poor little things a good tea and cake in my house, and subscribed my mite towards buying them another horse, and advised them to make their way to Aberdare, in Wales, and take to mining again, to send their children to school, for none of them could tell a letter, and they were growing up worse than heathens.

Their first venture at a showman's life was to exhibit the model and paintings, and they hired a donkey-cart and set off to Aberdare. When they got there the showman wrote to me, "I am sure you would have been amused if you had been there to have seen us; for

when we had our establishment erected—which, by the way, was very small—we were too shy at first to make an appearance outside; at last we made a resolution, and began to shout. So we found out after we had broken the ice that we were landed. On the first night we took enough to pay our month's rent. This gave us encouragement. We made a good many friends, and I became notorious among my fellow workmen. They thought me an extraordinary man. In three years I painted in oil colours thirteen pictures, three feet square, of the interior of a coal-mine and different other subjects. . . . . The waxwork show owners we had accompanied left Wales for London. Afterwards my wife went to Bristol and bought a barrel organ, and I had what we thought a very nice little show, and a nice van and horse. But alas! we did not know what travelling in the winter meant. We found very soon that we could not show every night on account of the weather, and also found that we could not get any credit. If we had no money there was no bread. I shall never forget the first night we got 'hard up.' Dear sir, just fancy yourself going into a large town about eight o'clock at night, and the rain coming down in torrents in the cold January month; the houses shining with wet, and a horse to be fed and stabled—for we kept it in a stable then—and six children to get a supper for, let alone yourself, and not a penny in your pocket, and not a friend in the world to speak to or to give you counsel. Well, that is just how we were situated in the first January that we travelled. Dear sir, perhaps you would say, 'Why did you not make for your home?' That would have been the wisest plan, but we thought we would endure anything rather than go back to be laughed at. Well, after my good wife had had a good cry, we went to the pawnbroker's and pledged my watch, thinking that we should *be able to* redeem it again in a few weeks. We borrowed

fifteen shillings, so that with opening the show we could be helped on for a few weeks, instead of which we met with a worse misfortune than ever. We lost our horse at Pontypool. We pledged our organ for £2, and then trailed our van to Swansea for Llanefni fair, thinking we should get money enough to buy another. More next week. The children all send their love to you, wishing you a merry Christmas."

This man was at one time earning nearly £2 per week, and had a good home. It will be found on close inquiry that nearly all our present-day showmen have been in better circumstances, and rather than be laughed at for their silly adventures by their friends, they are content to wander up and down the world little better than vagabonds, and to train their children for a tramp's life. By travelling in vans, carts, and tents they escape the school boards, sanitary officers, rent and rate collectors; and to-day they are—unthinkingly, no doubt—undermining all our social privileges, civil rights, and religious advantages, and will, if encouraged by us, bring decay to the roots. I speak that which I do know, from what I have seen and heard.

I had heard of a gipsy Smith who had settled down, and was now residing in one of the "courts" of Daventry. I hunted him up, and found him in a little cottage residing by himself. The cottage was nice and clean. When I went in I was invited to sit upon a chair. The old gipsy had just come home with some work. He was lighting the fire, and I said to him, "I suppose you could do very well with a *Hotchi-witchi* just now, could you not, Mr. Smith?" The old man turned up his bronzed face, and with a laugh said, "I just could, my dear good gentleman. I was looking for one this morning, but could not find one." I said, "Could you do with a *Kanéngro?*" The old man replied, "I could if I had one; but I never goes after them now. I don't

much care for them. I would rather have *Hotchi-witchi.*" After a general conversation for a few minutes, I said, "How long have you given up travelling?" He replied, "Nearly thirty years. I like it better now." "How long have you lived by yourself?" The old man's lips began to pucker and tears came into his eyes. After wiping his face, he said falteringly, "It is nearly four years since I lost my dear good bedfellow. We had lived together over forty years. She was a good creature, and I mean to meet her in heaven, bless the Lord. I've been a bad one in my time, but I've given up all bad ways, and have attended the Wesleyan chapel and the Salvation Army nearly two years, bless the Lord; it was the best day's work that ever I did when I found Him." The old gipsy now gave me a little of his history. "My grandfather was a Welsh gipsy, and used to attend Northampton and Daventry market and fairs with horses and ponies, and in course of time my father and grandfather began to travel round the midland counties and the Staffordshire Potteries. I was born under the hedge in Gayton Lane, between Kingsthorpe and Boughton Green. The gipsy's lot is a hard one, I can assure you, my good gentleman. I've seen a deal in my time. I attended Boughton Green fair for thirty years, and for eighteen years of this time in succession I never knew two of my cousins to leave the fair without fighting. I've seen murder upon the 'Green' more than once. It will never be known in this world how many murders have been committed upon the 'Green.' There has been some fearful bloodshed and rows done, I can assure you. The gipsies are very vengeful and spiteful, if they ever take it in their heads to be so. Two of my cousins, D—— and N——, quarrelled, when they were children down 'Spectacle Lane,' over a few sticks.

"They parted, and never met each other again for twenty years, and then it was at a Boughton Green fair. When

the fair was over they went into a field to have their old grievance out in blows. They had not been fighting long before D—— was put senseless upon the ground. N—— went to his tent, and after a few minutes I followed him, and said to my cousin, 'N——, you have killed D——; you had better be off.' He went then and there, and has never been took. We buried my cousin, and the day I shall never forget. It was a day, I can assure you. I don't know where my cousin is now, but I have seen him lots of times since then. The past is a blank, but I mean to get to heaven to meet my dear good old creature. I wish I could read; what a great pity it is that none of us poor gipsies can read. Bless the Lord, although I cannot read I prize the Bible, God's book; it's the best book in the world." The old man now took down a small pocket Bible off his kitchen shelf, and clasped it to his breast and said, "Although I cannot read I puts it in my chair when I says my prayers, and the dear Lord blesses it to my soul and makes me feel happy."

After partaking of a cup of tea and a slice of bread and butter in the humble "British Workman" in High Street, I made my way to the Byfield carrier, Mr. W——, to secure my "berth" in his cart, which was pretty closely packed with groceries, servants' boxes and trunks, nails, balms, and paraffin, "chaps," girls, and their mothers. There seemed to be no "cousins" in our party. I was pretty well wet through from head to foot, and it was perhaps fortunate that we were closely packed, as by which means I was, in all probability, prevented taking a severe cold. At a jog-trot rate we began to move out of Daventry at the heels of a grey horse, whose sides stuck out with fatness and with a "coat" as sleek as a mole. Mr. W—— looked well to his steed, while Mrs. W—— chatted, joked, and chaffed with her company inside. Up hills and down dales lay our course. Parsons and squires, as usual, were

the theme, in the first instance, for conversation and gossip. The Rev. Mr. So-and-So was a very good man in the pulpit but a bad one out of it, and a worse landlord. And they began to enumerate cases of hardship inflicted by him. I must confess that I should not like to be a clergyman with a large family in a small poor parish with a small stipend, and with "charity money" to deal out to a number of dissatisfied, idle, grumbling poor people. A clergyman nowadays has to mix up with the grand and fashionable, to visit the poor, dispense charity with smiles, write any number of letters for the parishioners, assist the sexton, take a lead in the choir, preach his own sermons, superintend the bell-ringers, keep the parish accounts, blow up the roadmen, visit "new comers," allay scandal, hush gossip, settle squabbles, be liberal, stand insults, know everybody's business, and know nobody's business. Must not pay too much attention to young ladies for fear of trouble at home. He must be handsome, lovely, and charming, with a rich melodious voice; hide the faults of evil-doers occupying big pews, lecture evil-doers in little pews; never enter a "dissenting" chapel, give Methodists the "cold shoulder" privately, fraternize with them publicly; take wine with the rich, be teetotal among the poor; give the "tip-top" price for his goods; and above all things, and under all circumstances, the parson must never look cross. If at any time he feels angry he must "keep it to himself inwardly and never show it." These are the qualifications for a minister of the gospel according to the ideas and motives of Church dwarfs and Sunday saints.

Parsons were now dispensed with, and darkness was creeping over us as we passed by Sir Charles Knightly, Baronet's, beautiful estate at Fawsly. The next leading topic of our dames and damsels was, as might be expected, *the* appearance of certain ladies at the usual maidenhood

ages. We had not gone far before I knew most of the ages of the "young" dames in the cart, who were much surprised to find that I was younger than they were. "Lor bless me!" said one, "there is no accounting for looks nowadays, for I was talking to a lady the other day, and telling her how young she looked, and that I wished I had as good a black head of hair as she had; but lor and behold you, when I went home with her, I found out that the black hair was a wig, and her own hair was as white as mine. I never was more astonished and surprised in all my life. I could not help but stare at her, she did not look like the same woman, Mrs. W——; I should not have known her if I had not known her so well, and what had made the change. Since then I have guessed but little at women's ages." We now pulled up to allow one or two of our party to get out. Our legs had been so crushed and mixed up with each other's that we were almost left in doubt as to whose legs we were standing upon, Mrs. W—— naïvely remarking, as the young damsels were stepping down, "Now mind and see that you get out upon your own legs; don't run away with some one else's."

We were now seated, and off we began to jog again. We had not got far before the company began to ask each other if they were "saved." The word "saved" is a word well known to me from childhood, and at its sound I pricked up my ears, and began to ask questions about it. And the answers I received were as follows: "Why, bless you, dear sir, have you not heard of the great stir that has been going on among the children connected with the Methodist and Congregational chapels in Byfield? We are woke up at eleven o'clock at night by the children singing about the streets Moody and Sankey's and Salvation hymns—

"'Only an armour-bearer, firmly I stand,
Waiting to follow at the King's command,' &c.

"'I love to tell the story
Of unseen things above,' &c.

"'Who are these beside the chilly wave,
Just on the borders of the silent grave?' &c.—

and away they go all round the village disturbing everybody. The young things ought to be in bed. The girls have got so excited that they go about shouting and singing in the daytime. One girl I knew went into the garden to get some cabbages, and while she was getting them up, the devil came to her, and told her that she was not 'saved,' and the girl knelt down in the middle of the garden at dinner-time, and there and then began to pray, cry, sing, and shout. After a time she jumped up and said she was saved. 'Then,' said the girl, 'Master Devil, I am saved.' Another girl went into the garden to get some potatoes, and the good, or some other spirit, came to her, and said that unless she was saved all the potatoes in the garden would go rotten. She there and then stuck the fork into the ground, and began to pray to God to save her. She had not prayed long before she got up and shouted out, 'I am saved! bless the Lord!'"

I asked how all this was brought about, and the answer I got was, that "The children began to sing in the streets some hymns, and to hold children's prayer-meetings, under the direction of nobody but themselves; and the movement began to spread about, and bigger folks attended the meetings, and now the place is almost in an uproar; everybody is asking each other, or nearly so, if they are saved."—I kept putting in a word for the children, bless their little hearts!—"Tea-meetings and prayer-meetings are held, the chapels are filled, and it is all through the children. I don't like so much shouting and going on in this way." I hope the good work is still going on, notwithstanding *the old* woman's cold water.

It was now pitch dark, and we were winding our way down the narrow lanes in Byfield to the carrier's home, with whom and his good wife I was to stay for the night, where we arrived "safe and sound," but cold and damp.

On the hearth there were six beautiful cats, named after her husband's friends. A month before this they had eight cats; and Mrs. W—— says next year she hopes to keep a dozen. The big-hearted, genial woman is an ardent admirer of animals. She said she never had but one valentine in her life, inside of which were pictures of cats, dogs, rabbits, and birds; and it was addressed to her as "Mrs. W——, Cat and Dog Fancier."

After a good warming and an excellent supper, "the good woman of the house," Mrs. W——, began to tell me a little of their family history, while her good husband was seeing to his horses, which were petted like children. My hostess related her story as follows: "My father lived to be ninety-four years of age, and my mother died last August at the age of ninety-two. I have had fifteen brothers and sisters, all of whom are dead but three. I have not been out of mourning for sixteen years." She now fetched the photographs, walking-sticks, and other things of her parents, for me to look at, and then continued her sorrowful story. "My mother," she said, "was a great sufferer for some years, but she bore it all so meekly. She never murmured once during her illness, and was always talking about heaven. Once she said to me, 'Why don't you kiss your father? He is in the room and wants to shake hands with you; why don't you kiss him?' Just before she died she called me to her and said, 'I am going to die, my child. I am going to your father.' And then she said, faintly, '"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." My girl, trust in Jesus. Come a little nearer to me.' And she then whispered in

my ear, 'Meet me in heaven,' and passed away like a child going to sleep."

"What is this that steals upon my frame?
Is it death? Is it death?"

Tears were now forcing their way down the good woman's face, and in the midst of sobs and sighs a tremulousness was manifest, and she quietly stole upstairs to pray, and to ask Jesus to dry her tears.

After she had left me I was upon the hearthstone alone. The ring-dove, nineteen years old, perched in its cage by the fireside, began to "coo—coo—coo;" the cats began to "pur—pur—pur;" the dog to snore; the kettle to sing; and the lamp shed a cheerful light upon the whole. I stole away to rest my weary bones upon a snowy-white feather bed, and under an extra lot of blankets and fine linen sheets. How different, I thought, as I wandered into dreamland, from the lot of the poor gipsy child, whose sheets are old rags, and whose feathers are damp and almost rotten straw, with mother earth for a bedstead, and the canopy of heaven for curtains.

At seven o'clock I turned out and got my breakfast, and with the morning dawn and a lovely sun shining in my face, I took a stroll through the ancient village to stare at the loitering villagers, gaze at the thatched roofs, eye over the tradesmen, to peep at a very ancient, curious, antiquated stone upon the green, which the roots of a huge tree were toppling over, enjoy the feast of some beautiful scenery, and make some inquiries about the empty house pleasantly situated in the village. I paid my bill—two shillings—and gave the little servant and mine hostess some picture-cards and little books, and then seated myself in the carrier's cart to be drawn round the village before we trotted off to Banbury fair. Out in the way, the nurse-girls, mothers, and children shrieked out with laughter as

they tossed upon their knees the round-faced, chubby, live, kicking, squeaking balls of love, embodiments of pleasure and trouble, singing and shouting—

> "Ride a cock-horse to Banbury Cross,
> To see a fine lady get on a white horse,
> With rings on her fingers and bells on her toes,
> And she shall have music wherever she goes."

On the way and in carts there were crowds of human beings, pretty and plain, big and little, tall and thin, short and stout, some dressed in silks and black cloth, some in rags and tatters; some were smiling all over their faces, and others looked as cross and sour as if they lived on nothing but vinegar and crabs and slept on thorns and thistles. Lovers and haters, pleasure-seekers and thieves, labourers, farmers, tradesmen, and gentlemen, were hurrying helter-skelter to Banbury fair. Some were crying, some were laughing, some were shouting, roaring, puffing, and panting; others were in carriages, with liveried servants as attendants; some were on horseback and donkeyback; others were in horse-carts, donkey-carts, and waggons; and among the number there was a little thin man of sixty winters, standing about two feet six high with his boots on, and by his side was his wife, about five feet high, stout, plump, and about thirty years old. I should not be surprised to hear that she had "not agreed to stop again." She was well able to carry him on her back, as gipsies do their children, instead of which she looked down upon him and allowed him to trudge along in the mud and rain. She had no love for the little fellow, or she would have carried him in her arms; in fact, she seemed inclined to walk on the other side of the road.

In the throng and crush we arrived at Banbury. I paid my fare—all the way from Daventry, one shilling and sixpence—shook hands with my kind friends, and made

my way into the crowd of sightseers, gipsies, mendicants, tramps, the fashionable, and the gay.

The first gipsy I met with was an old friend, "Righteous Smith"—which name was printed on the van—and his large family, at a cocoa-nut establishment. One of the daughters, dressed in lively colours, was in charge of the balls, and shouting out to the "chaps" as they passed forward, "Try your luck, gentlemen!" and the father shouted out, "Now, gentlemen, bowl away! all bad nuts returned." In response to their bewitching entreaties some old cricketers tried their hand, and, much to the chagrin of "Righteous Smith," they sent the nuts "spinning away" rather more freely than was profitable and pleasant for "Righteous," to the extent of putting his good name in the shade. This family of gipsies have, I should think, about three parts of Romany blood in their veins. Their van was a good one, and beautifully clean, and will pass muster when the new order of things comes about, for which I am working night and day, and which, I am thankful to say, is casting its shadows before it. The eight cocoa-nut establishments were owned by cross-bred Romanies, and one or two of the families lived in vans fairly clean. There were over thirty families living in the vans attending the fair, in which there would be an average of three children, one man, and one woman in each van. In five of the vans there were two men and two women in each. A number of those who owned small short shooting galleries and "rock stalls" slept with their children under the stalls.

From this cocoa-nut going "concern" I strolled among the shows, bosh, nonsense, and cheap Jacks. The introduction to one of the sparring establishments was by an old woman screaming out, "We are just going to begin." By her side was a dandily dressed and painted doll, *setting* herself off to the best advantage. On some steps

between the two women there stood a man painted as a fool, and dressed in tight indecent sparring costume. "Darkey," with his pug nose, short hair, low narrow forehead, high cheekbones, deep sunken eyes, glistening fire like a black glass bead in the centre of a white china button under the glare of a lamp, which he frequently turned sharply, quickly, and inquisitively to me as if anxious to know my movements. If he had been an uncaught thief, and conscience was telling him that I was a detective, he could not have eyed me over more quickly and closely than he did.

Gentlemen with diamond rings, poachers, and blackguards formed the company. A ring was formed, and "Darkey" and a "Johnny Straw" set to work with their gloves "milling each other, and just as their "savage" was getting up, the curtain to outsiders was drawn. How long the big and little fools kept at the "milling" process I did not stay to see. What fools there are passing through the world as gentlemen, to be sure, to witness such debasing exhibitions with "pure frolic" and laughter, while their money is being drawn out of their pocket imperceptibly by idle vagabonds.

Not far from this "boxing establishment" there was another "set-out" waiting for a second dose of fools, with a "champion boxer" as a "draw." Money went freely into the coffers, while the owners of stalls upon which useful articles were exposed for sale "had a bad time of it;" even the celebrated "Banbury cake" was "a drug in the market."

Over the door, as a sign at one of the shows belonging to Mr. Great Frederick Little, where a nude man was exhibiting himself—"girls and ladies not allowed to enter"—stood two calves' heads over a skeleton, and what surprised me most was that the good Banbury folks and country Johnnies could not see the satire that was being

played upon them. "Calves and bones" for a sign; and I think, judging from the dejected appearance of the people as they came out of the establishment, they felt like "calves and bones" themselves; at any rate they did not look any the wiser—certainly they looked sadder.

Turning from this concern, I was jostled into a crowd of folks to witness a man named Turnover Snuff, Esq., dressed in best blue cloth, with gold watches, guards, and rings, making fools of two well-dressed innocent youths, whom he had called up from the crowd and dressed in rags to eat buns for a prize, to be used as a "draw," to enable him to pass off his showy goods under various colours, dodges, and pretexts. While the youths were forcing the buns down their throats he was cracking jokes, which the people, with their mouths open, swallowed as gospel. What this "Cheap Jack" said in action, if not in words, was, "Now, ladies and gentlemen, you see that these two youths have come up here at my bidding, to make fools of themselves, and to eat these buns I am forcing down their throats, to cause you to twitter and laugh with your eyes shut to the things that are to follow; so in like manner I want all of you to shut your eyes and open your mouths to receive all the lies I want to force down your throats, that I may extract the coin from your pockets for my 'Cheap Jack' articles; so we will now proceed to business, ladies and gentlemen."

There were one or two exhibitions in the fair of a good genuine character, and the rest were "rubbish," of which it might be said of the performers, as a writer in the *Sword and Trowel* for 1876 says:

> "See, I am as black as night;
> See, I am darkness, dark as hell."

In the fair I ran against the sanitary and local canal boat inspector—Mr. Daniel Dixon—whom I asked to give me his independent views of the gipsies and show-

people attending the fair. In company with the medical officer of health he visited the vans, and the following particulars may be taken as a fair sample and average of the thirty vans in the fair, in accordance with what he says:

"According to promise, I forward you the particulars of our visits to the shows and vans visiting our fair on Thursday; and I also took a little more trouble to be along early on Friday morning. I was certainly astonished to see the people turn out of some of these places, some of the smaller vans turning out the greatest number. I give you a few instances of the number who turned out of the smaller vans. In Nos. 1, 2, 6, 13, and 19 there were 5 men, 5 women, and 22 children, making a total of 32 in the 5 vans. Education totally neglected. They were dirty, neglected, and uncared for. One van was as clean as could be expected.

"In 1879, 40 vans visited our fair.

"In 1880, 50 vans visited our fair, in which there were 38 men, 32 women, and 43 children.

"In 1881 there were 130 persons in 36 vans. While some of the vans were remarkably clean and well fitted up, there were some totally unfit for habitation, and certainly ought not to be allowed. The gipsy tribe was fairly represented, and evidently some of them are fairly blest with an amount of property which surprises me. There were a few surly people who did not like our visit, and gave us unmistakable signs of displeasure, but the majority were civil.

"If you can devise a plan whereby these people can receive *any* education, you will render valuable service, morally and religiously, to society at large."

After referring to the value of the Canal Boats Act, and the amendments I propose, Mr. Dixon said that he should be pleased to further my efforts at any time.

A minister of the town writes me to say that a number

of vans left the town on Thursday night or early on Friday morning. In the 15 vans he visited he found 48 children and 22 men and women, only six of whom could read and write a little. The rest were growing up as ignorant as heathen, and with the exception of two of the vans, dirt and wretchedness abounded in their *homes*. He said also that the conduct of the gipsies and other travellers at this fair has been better than in former years.

Notwithstanding the reports that have been in circulation, enough to shake the nerves of timid folks, I am received kindly and civilly by all the gipsies. One gipsy woman named Smith in a jocular term said, "Mr. Smith, we have been told that you are going to take all our children away from us and send them to school; you will require a mighty big school, bigger than any in the world, to hold them, I can assure you."

A few yards from where we were standing there was a van, into which I was invited to tea by the poor woman, the "mistress of the *house*." In this wooden tumble-down house upon wheels, about 9 ft. long by 5 ft. wide, and 6 ft. high, there were man, wife, and seven children in a most dirty and heartrending condition. The youngest was a baby only three weeks old, and was born in the van at Weedon.

I had a long chat with the good-natured woman. As I sat upon an old sack at the bottom of the van, with the children in rags and dirt creeping round me, and in the midst of an odour not at all pleasant to the olfactory organs, I felt as if my heart was almost ready to break at the sight of human woe and misery before me. To say that I could have wept hot briny tears would not convey in language telling enough the strong feeling of sympathy that crept over me, to the extent of almost freezing the blood in my veins. For a moment I seemed to lose sight of *everything* else in the fair, and it was with some difficulty

I could refrain from crying out, as I stepped from amongst the poor little forgotten and neglected children, and out of this gipsy house, with a cocoa-nut which "Jack" would thrust into my bag, "Good Lord! when shall these sad things and these wretched and pitiable sights come to an end? Would to God that the trumpet which is to bring to life the dead would begin to ring! ring! ring! and thrill into our ears a nervous, disquieting solo, keeping on and on till it has awoke us all up—aye! ministers, philanthropists, Christians of every grade, moralists, members of Parliament, cabinet ministers, and peers—to a sense of our duty towards the little and big heathens at our own door, before our fate becomes as that of Belshazzar and Babylon."

> "Oh say, in all the bleak expanse
> Is there a spot to win your glance
> So bright, so dark as this?
> A hopeless faith, a homeless race."
> "*Lyrics of Palestine*," *Religious Tract Society*.

I answer, No.

No children in lovely, beautiful England, the bright star of the West, stand so much in need of help as do our poor canal and gipsy children, who are living outside our factory, educational, and sanitary laws, and, with some bright exceptions, religious influences.

Short Excursions and Rambles in the Bypaths of Gipsydom.

SOME time ago a gipsy named Shaw was found in a Northamptonshire churchyard at midnight, asleep between the gravestones, with his fiddle by his side. When awakened by a wandering policeman crying out, "Now then, move on," gipsy Shaw grunted and growled out, "Who's there? What do you want, Mr. Devil? Wake these others up; they've been here longer than me, and when they goes I'll go, and not till then, Mr. Devil; and so make yourself scarce." The policeman saw, and in fact knew, that Shaw was a queer kind of customer, and he therefore let him snore and sleep among dead men's bones till morning. On the following morning Mr. Policeman met gipsy Shaw with his fiddle (*Boshomengro*) under his arm, when he called out, "Halloo, Shaw, you've left your companions behind you after all." "Yes," said gipsy Shaw; "when I opened my eyes it was daylight, and the sun was shining in my face, and I thought over fresh considerations."

At the present time the gipsies and other travellers in this country are among the dead men's bones of backwood gipsy writers and their present-day sins and wrong-doings,

with Mr. John Bull standing by, saying in effect to the lost gipsies and their children, "Snore on, sleep on; stick to your fiddles and the devil; care not a straw for either parsons or priests."

If John Bull cares not, will not and won't do for the children of travellers the same as he is doing for other children within his dominions, and what his Continental neighbours are doing for theirs, it is time the gipsies themselves "thought over fresh considerations," and walked out into open day, and demanded the blessings of English civilized life in a way that will readily secure an attentive ear to the cries and wails of their children.

Thank God, a few writers of tales and stories of a healthy, interesting, elevating, and heavenly kind are coming to the rescue of the poor gipsy, canal, and other travelling children. May their name be Legion and their motto be Fairelie Thornton's lines in the *Sunday School Chronicle*—

> "Direct the words I say,
> Oh, let them reach the heart;
> Let there be wingèd words alway,
> And light and life impart."

On my way to Edinburgh in October, 1880, to read a paper before the Social Science Congress, upon the condition of our gipsies and their children, I took occasion to call at Leicester races on my way, and paddled ankle deep in mud and quagmire to try to ascertain how many gipsy and other travelling children there were upon the course living in tents and vans. At a rough calculation there would be fully four hundred children and two hundred men and women huddling together in eighty of these wretched temporary abodes. Not a score of the children, except a few snatches in the winter, were receiving any education other than such as is obtained upon a racecourse and its associations, giving and taking lessons

in the initiatory stage of a gambler's life. The following cases will give some idea of the state of morality amongst the wandering classes. Phillips, a gipsy from Maidstone, had in his van one woman and eleven children; Green, a gipsy from Bristol, had in his van two men, two women, and eleven children; Brinklow, a gipsy, had in his van two women and seven children; Lee, a gipsy from London, had in his tent two young men, one woman, and seven children; making a total of forty-seven men, women, and children of all ages and sizes, huddling together in these four tents and vans, not two of whom could read or write a sentence. Mrs. Brinklow said her eldest girl attended a Bible-class at Bristol in the winter, which led me to think that the gipsy girl could read, but on inquiry I found she could not tell a letter. Those who are spell-bound by gipsy fascination and admire the "witching eyes" of picturesque human degradation and depravity, will consider this in the nineteenth century a state of civilization preparing us for the millennium, when the lion shall lie down with the lamb, and all tears be wiped away.

Last autumn I visited the gipsies at Cherry Island, near London, and found about thirty tents, in which there were between one and two hundred gipsy children growing up worse than Zulus. For one minute let us get inside one of the gipsy tents in which these children are born, and in which they live and die. It is about seven feet wide, sixteen feet long, and where the round top is highest, is about four feet and a half in height. It is covered with pieces of old canvas or sacking to keep out the cold and rain, and the entrance is closed with a kind of curtain; the fire by which they cook their meals is placed in a tin bucket pierced with holes. Some of the smoke from the burning sticks goes out of an opening in the top of the tent that serves as a chimney, while the rest of it fills the place and helps to keep their faces and hands a proper



GIPSY QUARTERS, PLAISTOW MARSHES.—*To face page* 281.

gipsy colour. The bed is a little straw laid on the damp ground, covered with a sack or sheet, as the case may be; an old soap-box or tea-chest serves both as cupboard and table. Here they live, father and mother, brothers and sisters, huddled up together. They live like pigs, and die like dogs. Washing is but little known amongst them; and of such luxuries as knives and forks, chairs and tables, plates and cups, they are very independent. They take their meals, and do what work they do, squatting on the ground; and the knives and forks they use are of the kind that Adam used, and sensitive when dipped in hot water. Lying, begging, and pretended fortune-telling have as much to do with their living as chair-mending, tinkering, and hawking. The heaviest work falls to the lot of the women, who may often be seen with a child upon their backs, another in their arms, and a heavily-laden basket by their side. The men lounge about the lanes and hedges with their dogs, whilst the children grow up in such ignorance and sin as to deserve the name of *ditch-dwelling heathens*.

The winter drives many of the gipsies to encamp in the marshes, or in the disused brickfields near London. Anything more dismal and wretched than this life it is hard to think of. All the poetry of gipsying is clean gone then, and nothing is left but filth, poverty, vice, and misery. In Hackney Marshes and elsewhere about London you may find scores of these tents, often so rotten that a stiff wind would blow them away. Creeping into one of them, almost on all fours, you find half-naked gipsy children squatting upon the ground, busy at skewer-cutting, for which they get from tenpence to one shilling for fourteen pounds' weight. Or else the family is at work in the more elaborate processes of making clothes-pegs. One chops sticks the right length; another trims them into shape and flings them into a pan of hot water; a child picks out

the floating pieces and bites off the bark; and then a bigger lad fastens the two together with a strip of tin, and the clothes-peg is ready. So the dreary day goes by until the lurcher dog springs up, the unfailing attendant of the gipsy man, and the women of the family return with the scraps they have picked up in questionable ways at back doors, and with the proceeds of their sales. At night all lie down where they have worked, and sleep as they are, with but a rag between them and the bleak night of pitiless rain and snow. Here the gipsy children are born and brought up. Here they live and here they die, almost as far away from the track of any day-school or Sunday-school as if they were African savages.

The poor wandering outcast gipsy child can say with Phineas Fletcher in the "Fuller Worthies"—

> "See, Lord, see, I am dead;
> Tomb'd in myself, myself my grave:
> A drudge, so born, so bred,
> Myself, even to myself, a slave."
>
> * * * *
>
> "Ask'st Thou no beauty but to cleanse and clothe me?
> If, then, Thou lik'st, put forth Thy hand and take me."

Two years ago I attended a village feast in the neighbourhood of Bedford, and found, as usual, a large gathering of gipsies and others of a similar class plying their avocation among the "knock'em downs," "three shies a penny," &c. On arriving at the place I found "a gipsy row upon the carpet," and on going up to one of the gipsies to ask him what it was all about, a gipsy some fifty yards off, more like a madman than anything else, began to bawl out all sorts of hard things, and in doing so other gipsies began to cluster round us, and to all appearance I seemed to be in a fair way for being in the midst of a "Welsh fight." So I said to the gipsy who was standing by me, "I'll go to see what he wants." "If you do," the gipsy

replied, "he will knock you down." I said, "Then I will go to be knocked down," and away I went, and while I was going along the mad gipsy was literally foaming with rage, and uttering oaths and curses on my head not quite as thick as hailstones. On arriving before his majesty I began to smile at him, and said as I put out my hand to him, "Will you shake hands?" At this he drew back a little, and said, "What do you mean?" I said, "Lend me your hand." He again said, with more emphasis than before, "What do you mean?" Ultimately he put out his hand into mine, and the result was nothing would please him and the other gipsies but that we must drink some ginger-beer together. And while this was going on a gipsy from Barking Road, London, whom I had seen before, whispered in his ear who I was, and that I was trying to get their children educated. So nothing would serve them but to explain in a public-house bar how the education of the gipsy children was to be brought about, which plan seemed to please them amazingly; and at the end of my tale they again closed in upon me, but this time to thank and bless me. The foremost in doing so was the mad gipsy whom I faced in the storm, saying, as he shook hands with both hands in a rough fashion, "I do love you, that I do, for taking so much trouble over our children." After similar greetings from the others we parted. Only one out of the large number of gipsies there could read and write, and he had taken to gipsying from the boarding-school at the age of seventeen, and, sad to say, neither his wife nor one of their eight children could tell a letter; and he further said that he was sure there was not one gipsy in a hundred who could read a sentence. To the gipsies I would say with a writer in *Hand and Heart*, Ah!

> "Mistaken mortals, did you know
> Where joy, heart's ease, and comforts grow!"

In May, 1880, I visited one of the largest towns in the midland counties, with the object of ascertaining the probable number of shows, vans, and other movable abodes there were in and round the outskirts of the town, and found close about thirty. These, together with others in various parts of the country, would in all probability bring the number to nearly forty-five. No doubt other counties would furnish similar results. In showing the number of those who live in these vans I will quote the following seven cases as a specimen. The numbers were given to me by a man and his wife, who own and live in one of the vans about the size of a carrier's dray, following the profession of "knock-'em-down." B——, man, wife, and eleven children of all ages and sizes; S——, man, wife, and four children; J——, man, wife, and five children; P——, man, wife, and seven children; B——, man, wife, and four children; E——, man, wife, and seven children; N——, man, wife, and five children. By these figures it will be seen that there are forty-three children and fourteen men and women, with four-fifths at least of English blood in their veins, living in these seven vans. Few of these persons can read or write. I should think scarcely half a dozen could write their own names. In the case of the man B——, two children could just put three letters together, and two could just write their own names, and this was the extent of their education. Some of the "popgun" owners I have known personally for some years. One of the sons worked for me, and would by this time have been earning his £1 per week; but instead of this the whole family of twelve have taken to this libertine kind of wandering existence, with a prospect that does not look very encouraging, and many others are doing the same thing. These cases are given to show what is going on all over the country. In some instances the parents would send their children to school,

but they say they cannot afford to pay for a week's schooling when the children can only attend a day or two. It seems hardly fair to make those who of all others should have their education encouraged to pay three times as much as town residents, which is the case when the children attend three different schools in one week. These ramblers are on the increase, and it is high time they were taken in hand. James, a man well known, and who travels with a "ginger-bread stall," said, when I told him my object and what the results would be, as he filled my hand full of his best "Grantham ginger-bread," "God bless you, man, for it, and I wish with all my heart it would come to pass to-morrow. Will it be three months first?" I told him that I thought it would be a much longer time than that, at which he shook his head, and said it was a "bad job."

The gipsies of England have nothing in the past to thank us for, except the policeman's cudgel and the "wheel of fortune" in the big "stone jug." No one has taken them by the hand to lift and lead them out from among the dead men's bones and demoralizing scenes in the midst of which they have been content with hellish delight to revel. Thank God, a few kind-hearted friends are beginning to notice them in their degraded condition, and to write to me on the subject. One of the leading woollen manufacturers of Scotland wrote to me in 1881 as follows:

"DEAR SIR,—

"I can testify to the horrible social state of the van population as described in your occasional communications to the *Times*. This class of people overflow in Scotland, and for some years I have had occasion to observe their habits and habitations. But hitherto no persons in authority seem to take any interest in the matter, though it is one of grave social importance. We have visits of people who live in vans, who bring to the town such entertainments as shooting galleries, hobby horses, and any kind of trumpery exhibitions. These

concerns are made up of families who pig together in their vans in a state which defies decency or sanitary rules. Whole families house in these small boxes upon wheels, usually in size about eight or nine feet by five feet. One lady recently tried to converse with some children of this class, and found they were ignorant of everything that was good. A gentleman interviewed one of the male heads of one family or group. He said his wife had had seventeen children, all born in the van in different counties of England. Within a few yards of my own door a van just lately stood for a night, in which slept one woman and five men or lads. The man—if he were the father—said they dealt in horses, and belonged to Hull, and they travelled the country living in their van, which was about eight feet by five feet. What I complain of is that, while local residents are made subject to various rules, educational and social, police, and sanitary order, these people should escape all kinds of supervision, and be literally a law unto themselves. I can well understand the strong reasons you have for calling public attention to such an evil."

The Rev. John L. Gardiner, vicar of Sevenoaks, wrote me in 1880 stating the guardians in his place were thinking of moving the authorities to take some steps for ameliorating their condition. In 1880 I received the following letter from a right worthy, good, and true working man living in Derby:

"DEAR SIR,—

"I doubt not but that you will feel surprised at receiving a letter from me, an entire stranger to you; but I feel certain that the subject which I wish to bring before you will be a sufficient apology for my intrusion on your valuable time. I have very recently seen in the public journals allusions to another appeal from you on behalf of our poor gipsy and van children, whom you are striving to reclaim from a life of utter ignorance, and I wish you a hearty God-speed in your noble endeavours. I doubt not, if it could be ascertained, there are thousands of these poor children in our land of boasted Christianity growing up in ignorance and crime, and enduring the greatest amount of misery that we could imagine. I have no doubt but that a large percentage of our worst criminals emanate from this class of poor children. When I think of these poor outcasts, and think that they are my brothers and sisters, made by the same Divine hand and bearing His own image, and for whom Christ died that they should be raised up to Him, I feel my heart burn within me, and I often pray to God that He would raise up some one able to plead their cause."

Early in 1880 a lady at Sherborne, Dorset, wrote me as follows:

"I have always taken a deep interest in them. I have again and again wished that I could help to make them more intelligent and useful, for they are not a stupid race. About two months since a poor young woman of this class called at my house with a beautiful infant almost naked. I relieved her, and inquired the whereabouts of their encampments, which was about one and a half miles distant from my home. I went over to see them, and I assure you my heart yearned to do something to help to sweeten the atmosphere of their moral life. There were youths and maidens, children, old women and old men; but alas! I was powerless to do anything for them."

A clergyman of high standing, near Salisbury, wrote me in 1880 to say that a committee of the Salisbury Diocesan Synod had commissioned him to collect information bearing on the neglected condition of the population accustomed for the greater part of the year to live in caravans and attend fairs in the diocese. "I could," continued the worthy clergyman, "bring before you many proofs of the wretchedly ignorant and degraded condition of the class I am speaking of, which have come under my own personal notice; but I know I am writing to one better informed on the subject than any one. Later on the Canon wrote me stating that the clerk of the market in Salisbury had told him that the stray population imported into the town as traders, showmen, &c., for an autumn fair amounted to about five hundred, and the fair was by no means a large one.

Last year a clergyman at Tavistock wrote me as follows:

"DEAR SIR,—

"Your letter in yesterday's *Western Morning News* respecting the education of the canal boat children reminds me of the question of the education of gipsy children, in which subject I believe you take a very active interest. I occasionally visit the gipsy tents and vans when they come into this neighbourhood, and find that a great many of these people admit that they cannot read, and others say they can

read a little; but I fear that the great majority of the gipsy population are quite unable to read, and have very hazy ideas on the great principles of religion.

"It seems quite a reproach to the English nation to allow these wandering people to continue in its midst without some efforts towards Christianizing them. Although the subject is no doubt a difficult one, it would not seem impracticable to get these gipsy children to attend school at certain centres for portions of the year. I don't know what has been done in the matter, but I wish you every success in your efforts for attaining this object, as well as for obtaining the efficient carrying out of the Canal Boats Act."

In 1881 a leading and active county magistrate of Danbury, Essex, wrote me as follows:

"DEAR SIR,—

"I observe that you say in your recent letter to the Secretary of the Lord's Day Observance Society, that the 'extension of the principle of the *Canal Boats Act* to all *gipsy tents*, *vans*, and other movable or *temporary dwellings*, should be brought about by all means.' I should be extremely pleased to aid in this work, for we reside near Danbury Common, where all the worst features of the vagrant life may be certainly seen. Numbers of little ones are daily passing before us untaught, and suffering in health through exposure to cold and wet, versed in arts of deception and quite inaccessible to influence. During the severe weather lately we had several ruffianly fellows on the common who defied interference with the most lawless proceedings. They went about in gangs breaking up gates and fences, and committing thefts and depredations all around the common. Any ordinary police force is quite inadequate to check or control them when a few reckless men chance to come together. They carried away and broke up two gates from a farm of mine on the other side of the common, and several occupiers on that side suffered severely from their violence. But all this is really of little importance compared with the question of *the children's* condition of ignorance and general ill-being. I am sure that those who dwelt *under tents* must have perished or laid the foundation of fatal disease during the late severe weather. It is clearly against public policy that parents should be allowed thus to trifle with the health of their children; and of course the same objection applies to their want of education. There are gradations of well (or ill) being among these poor wandering folks, as you no doubt are well aware. Some are in comfortable vans, and earn an honest livelihood by some handicraft—tinkering,

basket-making; but those who possess scarcely anything but the tent that covers them are in a miserable plight in deep snow or in wet weather, and young children are placed in peril. I will not weary you by enlarging on this topic, which must, moreover, be sadly familiar to you. I desired to assure you, as I now do, that I will do anything in my power to extend the legislation which you have already had the happiness of effecting to those poor outcasts who may doubtless through England be reckoned by thousands."

Early in the present year a Scotch Presbyterian clergyman at Aberfeldy wrote me to say that he had been deeply impressed for some time by the necessity there was for the State to take in hand the gipsy and similar travellers, and had last year got the Presbyterians of Breadalbane to petition Parliament to take some action in the way of improving the condition of the gipsies.

J. T. Pierce, Esq., J.P., county magistrate of Essex, writes me again under date October 2, 1882:

"Can you oblige me by forwarding a copy of the Bill amending your Act, 40 and 41 Vict. c. 60? I am desirous of bringing the question of *registration of vans*, &c., before my fellow magistrates at our next quarter sessions. The children who dwell in small vans and *under tents* cannot receive education under the present state of things, and it is seldom any of them are got into industrial schools. Possibly the magistrates of different counties might help forward the extension of your scheme in favour of these poor children. There is a common here on which we get a large number of them every year, and I have had a fair opportunity of seeing how urgent is the need of legislation, unless the children are to remain in their present state of ignorance and dirt. No thoughtful man can desire this, and you have already done so much in this direction that every one who thinks about it must wish to strengthen your hands for further work."

The foregoing independent statements, given by persons I have never seen, extracted out of shoals of letters I have received, will faintly show what is going on all over the country among our English heathens and hell trainers; while sensual, backwood, romantic gipsy novelists have been drawing a film over our eyes.

I have received a number of suggestions as to how the

gipsy problem should be solved. A Scotch Presbyterian minister suggests that the children should be sent to an industrial reformatory; in fact, he would obliterate them with an iron hand from the face of the earth. He goes on to say that the recent School Act is useless for them in Scotland. They can and do with ease evade all its requirements.

One kind-hearted lady, who writes to me from Brentwood, thinks that separate schools should be built for the gipsy and other travelling children. Neither of these suggestions are practicable and workable: the former is too severe for English liberty, and the latter too wild and scattered; and it would also be too costly, and in the end it would prove a failure.

On October 25, 1882, I sent Mr. Mundella copies of my Social Science Congress papers, with the hope of eliciting something from him as to what steps the Government proposed taking in the matter, and the following is his reply:

"PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE,
"WHITEHALL,
"*October* 26, 1882.

"DEAR SIR,

"I am much obliged to you for the copies of the papers read by you in the Health Department of the Social Science Congress on the Canal Boats Act and on the gipsy children, and I will give the same my careful attention. I shall be very thankful if anything can be done to remedy the evils affecting the neglected children referred to in your papers, and to whose interest you have given such long and faithful service. "I am, dear sir,

"Yours faithfully,
"A. J. MUNDELLA.

"*George Smith, Esq.*"

I have thought since I took up the canal crusade in 1872, as my letters will show, and I cannot for the life of me do otherwise than think so now, that the Canal Boats Act Amending Bill I am humbly promoting could be

made to include all movable habitations and temporary dwellings. The counsel to the Education Department, Mr. Ilbert, thought otherwise, and of course I have had to submit to the "ruling of the chair." He thought that a separate Act would better meet the case of the gipsy and other travelling children. I am not now alone in my idea of including all movable dwellings in my Canal Amending Bill; for since I mooted the subject in my letters to the press and in other ways, friends have come round to see that there is something in the suggestion worthy of notice. Canal-boat cabins and vans are boxes in which are stived up human beings of all ages and sizes, without either regard for health, morals, sense, or decency, packed closer than the poor unfortunate creatures in the black hole of Calcutta were. These moving homes are drawn, in many instances, by animals with only one step between them and the blood- or foxhound's teeth. The only difference is, one home is moving through the country upon our magnificent, black, streaky canals, of the enormous width of about twenty feet, and an average of three feet deep. For the size of boats and boat cabins and other particulars I must refer my readers to my works, "Our Canal Population," and "Canal Adventures by Moonlight," and for the full particulars of gipsy tents, vans, &c., to my "Gipsy Life."

The last Essex Michaelmas Quarter Sessions, with Sir H. Selwin Ibbetson, Bart., M.P., in the chair, was supported by between forty and fifty leading county magistrates. The following is taken from the *Chelmsford Chronicle*, October 20, 1882:

"THE CANAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL.—Mr. Pierce suggested that this Bill should be referred to the Parliamentary Committee, with a view to their considering whether clauses should not be recommended to Parliament to be added for dealing with gipsy and travelling showman life as well as canal life. Mr. Pierce spoke of the miserable

squalor and unwholesome condition in which the gipsies and travelling showmen lived, and said he thought it was necessary that their children, who are absolutely uneducated, and who number about 30,000, should be looked after. Seconded by Mr. G. A. Lowndes. This motion was carried."

In a leading article upon the subject the *Chronicle* stated :

"An excellent suggestion was made to the court by Mr. Pierce. It was that they should refer the Canal Boats Act Amending Bill to the Parliamentary Committee, with a view to their recommending to Parliament the addition of clauses bringing nomadic life—like that of the gipsy and showman fraternity—within the scope of the measure. Of gipsy life we have some experience in Essex, and we know that it stands in sad need of regulation. Mr. Pierce stated, *inter alia*, and on the authority of Mr. George Smith, of Coalville, that there are about 30,000 children belonging to gipsies and travelling showpeople, most of whom are being brought up wholly without education. It is no less a duty to society than to the children themselves that this state of things should be put an end to, for we cannot hope to banish the ruder kinds of crime, such as the vagrant classes are commonly guilty of, without first banishing ignorance. In this view we hope that other public bodies will follow the example, and that the promoters of the Bill about to be brought forward will be induced to extend it so as to embrace the gipsy and kindred classes."

In July, 1880, Mr. Joseph Cowen very kindly put a question to Mr. Dodson, the President of the Local Government Board, relating to the education of gipsy and other travelling children, and the sanitary arrangements of their homes, and Mr. Dodson replied, "There is considerable difficulty in dealing with gipsy tents and vans, but the matter has been brought under the notice of the Board, who will endeavour to deal with it when a suitable opportunity presents itself for that purpose."

The Government had their hands pretty full last year—Ireland and the Irish at the beginning, Ireland and the Irish in the middle, and Ireland and the Irish at the end—nearly altogether Irish, which no one grudges to make our Brothers and Sisters on the Emerald Isle contented, pros-

perous, and happy. God grant that her noble sons and daughters may go ahead, and her "Moonlighters" be swallowed up in the greater light that rules the day. This being so, I kept myself pretty well occupied in piloting, altering, and manœuvring my Canal Amending Bill through its initiatory stages, and had no time to deal with the gipsy problem other than to try "at every turn and twist" to find a niche, nook, or a peg in the Bill upon which to hang the gipsy question, which to me did not, and does not even now, seem at all a difficult thing to do. The more I go into the details of the canal and gipsy question the simpler they become. All that is required, as in the case of the brickyard children, is to take hold of them and to begin to deal with them in a business fashion, as other questions are dealt with.

The subject is studded with prickles, but immediately it is grasped the prickles become harmless. In the distance they look like drawn glistening daggers, which, as you approach nearer to them, are no more dreadful than rushes in the meadow. Unearth the Guy Fawkes gipsy monster, and we shall soon find out a way to deal with gipsy vagabonds and to reclaim their children. Standing by whimpering, sobbing, and sorrowing over the children will not pull them out of the gutter; nor will covering them with backwood gipsy nonsense and trash make them white. The gipsies and their children are dark and down, and to whiten and raise them the law and the gospel must come in: first, the law, schoolmaster, and sanitary officer; and second, the Christian minister and the gospel.

In bygone days, under the reign of Elizabeth and the Georges, the hangman's hemp and the whipper's thong were used as a cure for the gipsy social evil, but with worse than no results. Recently, in Hungary, measures of another kind were adopted to compel the gipsies to make themselves scarce. Innumerable complaints had

at times reached the chief of the police from the townsfolk of Szegedin, in Lower Hungary, with whose portable chattels and goods the gipsies persisted in making free. The police official was sorely perplexed how to deal with the wandering ragamuffins. The gipsies in Hungary, as well as in other parts of the world, have masses of hair—our present race of English gipsies cannot boast of the raven black hair as formerly—so the chief of the police conceived the idea of barbering their pates of all their locks. The gipsies were taken into custody and the town barbers were summoned to clear the heads of the swarthy gipsies of their present adornments. The orders were obeyed to the letter, regardless of either sex or age. In a few minutes the whole tribe with pates as smooth as an ostrich's egg were conveyed to the town gates in a state of indescribable discomfiture. I "guess," as Jonathan says, they will not for a long time visit Szegedin again. There is a wide difference between the Hungarian authorities and the Nottingham town authorities. Not being able to attend the recent Nottingham goose fair, I wrote to the town clerk and the chief constable for a few particulars, relating to the condition of the vast numbers of poor neglected gipsy and other travelling children who attended the borough fair. The town clerk deigned not to descend from his high pinnacle to order a reply to my letter. The chief constable, after some days had passed over, said he would send me some facts, which, though I reminded him of his promise more than once, are not yet to hand. Gipsy children may live and gipsy children may die, but these officials, I suppose, think that they shall go on for ever, and in the end, as a writer in *The Christian Age* says, they will

"Rest where soft shadows lie and grasses wave;"

at least they hope so. Full particulars of the hardships

and cruelties practised upon the gipsies for their wrong-doing will be found in my "Gipsy Life."

Knowing full well as I do that nothing but salutary measures of the kind I propose, and have proposed for many long years, will meet the case, I had again the audacity to put the question to the Government, through Mr. Burt, with the object of eliciting from them the steps—if any—they proposed taking this Session for dealing with the gipsy problem.

"WELTON, DAVENTRY,
"*November* 16, 1882.

"MY DEAR MR. BURT,

"I shall be glad if you will put the enclosed questions to the Government for me relating to the gipsy children. With kind regards,

"Very sincerely yours,
"GEORGE SMITH, *of Coalville.*"

The questions and answers are taken from the *Times*, *Morning Post*, *Standard*, *Daily Chronicle*, and the leading papers throughout the country.

"TEMPORARY ABODES.

"Mr. Burt—To ask the President of the Local Government Board if the Government intend taking any steps early next session for bringing temporary abodes such as shows, tents, vans, and places of the kind, under the influence of the sanitary officers."

Mr. Dodson, the President, said he would "consider whether the law as it stood was in need of amendment in this respect; but he could not, on this any more than on any other subject, now give any undertaking as to the introduction of a Bill next session."

"GIPSY CHILDREN.

"Mr. Burt—To ask the Vice-President of the Committee

of Council on Education if the Government intend taking any steps early next session for bringing about the education of gipsy and other travelling children living in vans, carts, shows, and other temporary dwellings."

Mr. Mundella said: "It is exceedingly difficult to devise any effectual scheme for the education of the nomadic population referred to in the question of my hon. friend, and up to the present we have received no suggestion for dealing with the subject which appears to be practical. The matter, however, is 'under consideration,' and we propose during the recess to confer with the Local Government Board respecting it."

Mr. Burt wrote to me as follows:

"HOUSE OF COMMONS,
"*November* 22, 1882.

"MY DEAR MR. SMITH,

"You will see from the *Times* to-day the answers given by Mr. Dodson and Mr. Mundella. They are not so encouraging as one would like, though it may do good to call attention to the subject.

"Very truly yours,
"THOMAS BURT."

Parliament having been opened February 15, 1883, I began to make a move towards getting my Canal Boats Act Amendment Bill before the House of Commons for the third time—last year it was introduced to the House of Lords by Earl Stanhope—and lost no time in seeing my friends Mr. Burt and others upon the subject, some of whose names are upon the back of the Bill. The names upon the Bill are as follows: Mr. Burt, Mr. S. Morley, Mr. John Corbett, Mr. Pell, and Mr. Broadhurst. Feeling anxious, and seeing no difficulty in the matter, I wrote to Mr. Burt on March 8, 1883, about introducing a clause in the Bill to include gipsy and other travelling children—my plans for improving the condition of the canal children and gipsy children being identically the same in *every*

particular so far as the provisions of the Act are concerned—and he replied as under:

"HOUSE OF COMMONS,
"*March* 8, 1883.

"DEAR MR. SMITH,

"If you want a new clause or any alteration in the Bill, kindly write it out on a copy of the Bill and forward it to me.

"I have seen Sir Charles Dilke, and he advises me to talk the matter over with Mr. Hibbert. I shall do so as soon as I can see Mr. Hibbert.

"I go to Newcastle to-morrow, returning on Monday night or Tuesday.

"I am not hopeful that the Government will do anything in the present state of business.

"Yours truly,
"THOMAS BURT."

I added the following clause to the Bill, and at the same time I gave under the Bill more power to the Education Department than I had done in the previous Bills.

The new clause affecting gipsy children runs thus:

"11. The expressions 'Canal Boats,' 'Canal Boat,' and 'Boat,' in the principal Act and this Act, and also in the regulations of the Local Government Board and Education Department, shall include all travelling and temporary dwellings not rated for the relief of the poor."

I forwarded copies of the Amended Bill to Sir Charles Dilke, the new President of the Local Government Board, and also to Mr. Mundella, the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, and here are their replies. A few days previously I had written to Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. Mundella, urging them to take up the Bill; in fact, I have for years been pressing the Government to take up the Bill, as one that will do much good and bring them much credit. Of course I cannot expect them to do impossibilities. I know their hands are full; at the same time the period has come when the sixty thousand canal and

gipsy children must be educated and cared for by "hook or by crook," as being of primary importance for the country's welfare to the thousand and one things that are now before Parliament.

"LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD, WHITEHALL,
"*March* 14, 1883.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have to thank you for the copy of the Bill you have sent to Sir Charles Dilke. In consequence of Mr. Ashton Dilke's death he will not be present in the House of Commons this week.

"Yours truly,
"A. E. C. BODLEY.

"*George Smith, Esq.*"

"PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE,
"*March* 14, 1883.

"SIR,

"Mr. Mundella desires me to thank you for sending him a copy of your Canal Boats Act Amendment Bill enclosed in your letter of the 12th inst.

"Yours faithfully,
"H. T. BRYANT.

"*George Smith, Esq.*"

My days of hard work, and scores of letters written in relation to the questions put to Mr. Dodson and Mr. Mundella, have brought forth the usual molehill of "under consideration." The political fields of moral and social progress are full of crotchets and molehills. Would to God that either John Bull with his horns or John Straw with his spade would level them to the ground.

At any rate those mountainous molehills, six inches high, which are checking the van of social progress, laden as it is—aye, heaped up—with blessings for the thirty thousand poor little gipsy children who are starving to death in our midst, in the mud, rotten straw, filth, and rags of a soul-perishing and body-killing nature, amidst which the poor gipsy child has to live.

The greatest difficulties I know of are the dung-heaps scattered about by sensational trash backwood gipsy

writers. I can almost imagine our imported and other Demetriuses and damsels calling out on the steps of St. Stephen's, Westminster, "Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth." "Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people." "Our craft is in danger to be set at nought." "Let us hang the devil."

The registration official overcomes "difficulties" when he registers a gipsy hawker's van in order that he may extract £4 from him; and the policeman overcomes "difficulties" when he brings to bay before a bench of magistrates a gipsy child for stealing a turnip, or a gipsy poacher for making too free with a partridge. There are seas of "difficulties" to be waded through, it would seem, before the gipsy children are to be led to the school doors, and the sanitary inspectors to their suffocating, immoral, and unhealthy homes. It is un-English, wicked, and unjust to deliver the gipsy and other travelling children over to the policeman, without ever having taught them to know right from wrong in day and Sunday schools. A terrible day of reckoning and vengeance awaits us for our wrong-doings towards our present-day English gipsy children, think about it as lightly as we may.

The sanitary inspector steps into lodging-houses to prevent overcrowding. The factory inspector steps, without an invitation, into the workshop to prohibit the overworking of children. The Board of Trade officer will not allow overcrowding of ships, although they may be classed as A 1 at Lloyd's. Overcrowding in barracks and workhouses is not allowed, and the School Board officer steps into a labourer's household—the head of which, with a large family surrounding him, only earns about 12s. per week—under pain of a fine and the "squire's" displeasure, and orders the young urchins off "neck and crop" to school; while canal and gipsy children are left out in the cold.

Two years ago I invited twelve gipsy children, who were

living in two vans and attending our feast, to tea on our hearthstone. Although three of the parents could read and write, and ten of the children were of school age, not one of the poor little things could tell a letter. All the van-dwellers were in the lowest depths of degradation, filth, and misery. They were surrounded with sunshine, and yet it never entered their wretched dwelling; at any rate they never opened their door with glad hearts and thankful song to receive its cheering rays.

The chimes and music of church bells seemed to have no other effect upon their lives than the bringing forth of the cries of misery, wails of anguish, and groans of despair. The beautiful robes with which nature was clothed made their ragged, wretched torn garments look as if they had been pulled to pieces, torn and stuck together by demons who had thrown off all moral restraint, and were following the downward tendencies of human nature to their hearts' content. Three of the parents once had a comfortable settled home, but alas! alas! it seems to be all over, and a blacker future for the children awaits them, if the Government do not take the poor things by the hand and lead them a step forwards and upwards.

At the close of 1882 I visited, on a Sunday afternoon, a camp of gipsies upon Turnham Green. There were five vans and tents, and fourteen men and women and seventeen children squatting round their fires upon the wet and slushy grass. As I neared them, five of the gipsy children, half naked, came running towards me. One little curly-headed fellow, named Boswell, shouted out, "If you please, guv'-nor, have you come to teach us to read, the same as a kind lady did last summer? We wish you would. Have you brought us any picture books? Please read a bit to us." After a few minutes chat with them, I emptied my bag of cards, and with a sorrowful heart left the gipsy children in their ignorance to speed their wishes into the air, so it

appears. With a writer in the *Sunday Magazine*, I say with a deep, deep-drawn sigh—

> "Oh the wandering waifs and strays,
> In hiding day and night,
> And lacking verdant shelter,
> On their lives a blight;
> Aye, creeping far and farther
> From the eyes of men;
> If they find a lodging,
> 'Tis in some horrid den!"

A little later on I went to Daventry and found a man—a tradesman—in the market-place, exhibiting a deformed pony rather than follow his own trade. Both man and wife could read and write—in fact, the woman had once been a Sunday-school teacher—but not one of their five children could read a sentence.

Only the other day, our good vicar's respected wife, Mrs. Darnell, in company with her niece, Miss Stansfeld, took shelter in a cottage, rather than face two most repulsive-looking men and one woman with seven children, who were tramping the country in a most wretched and forlorn condition. Their only home consisted in an old hand-cart full of rags, upon which were perched, on a most bitterly cold and wet day, three poor gipsy children; and the other four children were trudging by the side of the hand-cart scarcely able to get one foot before the other. Their shoeless footprints seemed to cry out loud for help. Many gipsies camp upon Cannock Chase from time to time, and such is their character that people passing that way in dark hours generally take the precaution to be armed with pistols, and to have dogs by their sides.

Think about it lightly as we may, the evils of gipsying are on the increase in this country. Fortune-telling and deceit are taking fast hold upon the "silly girls and young chaps." Very recently the *Daily News* reported a case in Dorsetshire where two gipsy women induced a

dairyman's wife to part with her sovereigns for a sheep's heart studded with pins in mystic patterns outside, and crammed inside with bright farthings. The heart was to be hung in the chimney till Easter, when it was to be taken out and all the farthings to be turned into sovereigns. The woman's husband broke the "spell" by pulling the heart out of the chimney before Easter. The *Graphic*, in the spring of 1882, reports a case of a "white witch" at Plymouth, who declared that the whole crew of a smack were under a "spell"—and the crew believed it—which "spell" only the gipsy witch could remove, and of course for money only. The *British Workman* for October, 1882, shows a little of some of the evils of fortune-telling. At the Bradford county police-court recently, Delia Young, a gipsy, was charged with fortune-telling. For some weeks the prisoner, with a number of other gipsies, had been staying at a village named Wyke, and hundreds of persons of all ages and both sexes had visited her. Her fees ranged from 1s. to 5s., the latter sum being charged when a "planet was ruled." It was stated that her earnings must have averaged several guineas a day for many months. For the defence it was contended that the prisoner and her family had told fortunes at Blackpool during the season for twenty years. She was fined £5 and costs, with the alternative of two months' imprisonment. The money was paid.

I have visited more than once the gipsies upon Plaistow marshes in company with Mr. ——, and also with my son, and found about thirty families squatting about in their vans and tents, up to their knees in mud, and in a most heartrending condition. Farmers house their pigs in a much better condition than we found the poor lost gipsies tented and housed. Gipsy children came round us by the score. There would be not fewer than *between* a hundred and a hundred and fifty poor little

creatures, growing up without ever visiting either the school or the church, although there were a magnificent school and church within a stone's throw. The sanitary inspector, school board officer, and Christian ministers were unknown to those wretched, lost gipsy children. They are fully acquainted with the policeman and his doings. In one or two of the vans smallpox and fever appeared to me to be at work. Round the outskirts of London there will be nearly 3,000 gipsies tenting and squatting about. They generally find the lowest and swampy spots.

My scores of visits to various parts of the country during many years are not recorded here, but the same sorrowful tale is everywhere manifest.

It does seem that letters of blood and words of fire will be needed to arouse the hearts and consciences of my countrymen, and compel them to observe the dark side of human life which lies close to our eyes and noses; and to draw the veil of ignorance away which is preventing the sun of civilization carrying out its mission among our own outcasts.

"The darkness falls, the wind is high,
Dense black clouds fill the western sky,
The storm will soon begin.
The thunders roar, the lightnings flash,
I hear the great round rain drops dash;
Are all the children in?"

The Christian Freeman, 1877 *and* 1878.

I answer, "No! no!" and with a tear-fetching pang I again say, "No!" The canal and gipsy children are still outside the door, and our legislators do not care to open it, owing to the "difficulties" which prevent the latch from being lifted up. The nail is in the way, and the door is locked—

"Nobody kind words pouring
In that gipsy heart's sad ear
But all of us ignoring
What lies at our door so
The Chris

Rambles among the Scotch Gipsies at Yetholm.

THE 18th of December, 1882, was a bitterly *shil* (cold) *divvus* (day), partly frozen *ghiv* (snow) lay several inches on the *chik* (ground). The *dûvel* (sky) was gloomy and overcast as if threatening this *doŏvelesto-chairos* (world) of ours with a fresh outburst of *vénlo* (wintry) vengeance. Not a *patrin* (leaf) was to be seen upon the *rook* (tree). The *bával* (wind) seemed at times to engage in a chorus of *shoolo* (whistling) and howling, and other discordant *gûdli* (noises). The few linnets, sparrows, bullfinches to be seen hopping about the *drom* (road) in quest of *kóben* (food), were almost starved to *méripen* (death); *shil* (cold) and *bok* (hunger) had made them tame and *posh* (half) *moólo* (dead).

In a few minutes I stood at our door with my old grey coat over my arm, wondering whether I should in my state of health face my cold journey to Scotland. After a little reflection, quickened by "the path of duty is the path of safety," which seemed to be more beautiful than ever, I started with my bag in hand to tramp my way to the railway station. I did not feel on the way in a humour for singing, with cap in hand, and in joyous strains, "Oh! this will be joyful," but could have said with Wesley,

"If in this darksome wild I stray,
Be Thou my Light, be Thou my Way."

In the train I duly seated myself, and we sped on till I arrived at Leicester, the seat of stockings and leather.

Leicester is a pleasant town, but, as in the case of other towns, there are a few—only a few, thank God!—fools in it whose light from farthing candles will become less as her wise men, good and true, increase. After my landing upon the platform I made my way to the house of my sister-in-law, and there rested my bones for the night. During my restless night, with the full blaze of a lamp shining in my face, some of the following aphorisms were entered in my note-book:—

The books of infidels, sceptics, socialists, and atheists may be compared to handfuls of sulphur cast into the fire of public opinion. They give a bluish flash for a moment, reflecting deathly and ghastly hues upon those who stand near; which sometimes cause children, and those of weak minds, narrow vision, and short sight to put their hands into the fire to see where the deathly colours come from.

Righteous kings and queens, doing God-like acts to elevate and beautify their subjects, may be compared to heavenly gardeners, whose business in life is to beautify human nature and society with an increasing number of moral tints and splendour, reflected by the heavenly throne, and to transmit the colouring rays to the human flowers growing up under their charge; thus making this beautiful earth more like Paradise every year.

The righteous deeds of a good king or queen, when they emanate from a heart filled with heavenly desires to render earthly subjects contented and happy, are seeds that the spirit of evil cannot kill. They will live and thrive to the end of time, and then they will be transplanted to heaven to bloom through eternity.

When a Christian is said to have taken to doubti God's goodness, lovingkindness, and fatherly care, may be said to have drawn down the blinds of his so and dimmed his vision of the beauty, power, and love Jehovah, the creator and upholder of all things in heave earth, and sea.

Those who through fraud, craft, and deceit obtain t crown of laurels won by others will find that, instead the soft, beautiful leaves, it will turn into a hard crown thorns, that will prick sharp and deep enough to tou the quick of the soul, ruffle the thoughts, disturb the min and trouble the conscience.

As bees in gathering honey from flowers often transm many new and lovely colours to plants and flowers, so i like manner good children in passing into the wor among all kinds of families, especially among the youn change and beautify by kind words, soft answers, ar example the characters of those they are brought i contact with.

The words used in faith by good Christian fathers ar mothers in blessing their children are jewels, pearls, ar other precious stones, which will be strung together b angelic hands with golden threads, and worked into pa terns that are to adorn the children as they walk over th plains of Paradise. They are the immortal flowers earth, with a life within them that will transform the into the everlasting flowers of heaven, that will be strew by little loved ones upon the path of saints as they wal the streets of the New Jerusalem.

It is not always the largest flowers which make th prettiest bouquet, or adorn a drawing-room to the be advantage. The little bird's-eye, that grows among th thistles in the hedge-bottom, is prettier and more mode than the large sunflower; so in like manner it is n always the big, shining, dashing, flashing Christian, wit

few real good deeds, that is the most beautiful and lovely in God's sight. The little Sunday-school scholar, with Jesus shining out of his actions, in a garret is the most beautiful and lovely to look upon, and illumines a modest quiet corner with the greatest effect.

Bees gather honey from the most unassuming flowers, which are oftentimes hid among thorns; so in like manner the sweetness of heaven is to be gathered from good and lovely children, brought up by Christian parents, living modestly and quietly in our back streets among the roughest and lowest of the low, more prickly than thorns, and more poisonous than poison.

Those short-sighted beings engaged in trying to get virtue out of a gin-palace will find it harder work than extracting honey out of a putrifying dead dog.

Double-faced Christians, engaged in trying to draw forth goodness out of sin, wherewith to quench the qualms of conscience, will find that they are engaged in a more difficult task than that of drawing pure spring water from a cesspool.

Words are leaves, prayers bloom, and deeds fruit. If the tree has grown up under religious influence the kernel contains seeds of immortality, but if reared under the influence of sin the kernel will be a rotten core and worse than useless.

To love and to sing is to live, and to hate and to swear is to die.

Bad deeds, though often written and rewritten, soil the hands of the scribe, corrupt his heart, taint the olfactory senses of the reader—although they may be as angels—with an unpleasant odour, offend their eyes, and become in the end illegible blotches, smudges, and smears.

Good deeds, performed with a good object, eat themselves clearly and legibly into the pages of history, which time turns into gold, and leave a pleasant impression upon

the writers and readers—although they may be devils—that time and men's hands cannot efface.

Those who write flashy, misleading lies of various hues, whether about gipsy, saint, or angel, will find that they are earning red-hot coppers, which "puffs" will not prevent burning the author's fingers and scratching his conscience.

Worldly-minded human beings engaged in trying to weave a cloak of righteousness out of their own evil deeds wherewith to hide their deformities, ugliness, and consumption, may be compared to a poor old deformed woman trying to weave a golden cloak out of rotten straw to hide the wretchedness and misery of Seven Dials.

Those engaged in reclaiming children from sin and ignorance are making themselves a silver ladder upon which to climb to golden fame.

When our ways are clouded by mysteries and doubts, we may take it for granted that we have got off the road, and are wandering among marshes and swamps from which fogs and poisonous vapours arise.

Satan often ties firebrands to the tails of hypocritical professing Christians, and uses them as Samson did his foxes.

At 6.30 on Tuesday morning I stepped out of doors with my travelling paraphernalia upon some six-inches deep of newly fallen snow. My only light was the flickering gas, which was miserable indeed. Underneath the snowy carpet the roads felt, and in fact were, like a sheet of glass. If the new soles upon my shoes had been beeswaxed and polished I could not have slipped and slurred about more. Sometimes my bags were in the snow, and at other times I was trying the resisting force of the lamp-posts. Some of the workmen as they passed me rolled about as if they were "tight," and I daresay they thought me to be a brother chip. After three-quarters of an hour's exercise for patience,

temper, and legs, I arrived "safe and sound in wind and limb" in a third-class compartment, and without any hot-water bottles to cheer my onward course.

At Trent Station I spent five minutes with Mr. Taylor, the fine, good-looking station-master, in talking over the caste, kind, and character of the gipsies in India, in which country Mr. Taylor was a station-master for some time. At Settle I pulled up for a cup of coffee and a sandwich. The little refreshment-room, about ten feet square, was quite a delightfully warm, cosy nook. The glasses and decanters of variegated colours were sparkling, the fire was bright and cheerful, and the waitress brimmed over with smiles, grace, and good-nature. I was nearly frozen, and to jump from the freezing train to the warm sunny "bar" at one bound was enough almost to make me wish that a coal truck would get across the line to cause a delay for half-an-hour. It was not to be, and the cruel porter bawled out, "Take your seats, gentlemen!" and we were off to the snowy region of the North, where all things are not forgot and sheep looked like rabbits. In puffing along we passed through the snow-drifts, which two days previously had held bound by the icy hand of winter eleven trains and their freights of "live and dead stock" for twenty-four hours, bringing forth from the sympathetic wife of the station-master hot tea, cakes, and coffee for the travellers.

In passing over the Settle and Carlisle railway I experienced a very queer kind of sensation. I was in the carriage alone. For many miles nothing was to be seen but snow and telegraph posts. The fences were covered, the sheep and cattle were housed, and, owing to the barren nature of the soil, there were no trees to be seen peering their heads upwards. A gloom, without a break or gleam of sunshine, spread over the face of the heavens. The snow-covered hills and valleys looked like so many white clouds, and appeared to be undulating as

we passed through them. Not a sound was to be heard except the puffing and panting of the engine as we steamed away, and it appeared as if we were miles high between two worlds, travelling I knew not whither. To make myself believe that I was still in the land of the living and not among "the dreary regions of the dead," I paced my compartment pretty freely, filling up my time by singing—

"One there is above all others," &c.,

and counting the telegraph posts as we glided along. Among other things, as I walked to and fro in my solitary compartment, I jotted down some of the following thoughts and aphorisms:—

Faith is the quicksilver of heaven placed in the hearts of God's children. When it is low or weak, rains and storms are brewing, difficulties are ahead; and when it is high and strong, then peace and joy may be expected. Unsteady Christians will do well to change their quarters.

Every glass of intoxicating drink given by parents to their children may have pleasure swimming upon the surface, but at the bottom there will be dregs of groans, and cries that will be hurled back by the children with vengeance and retorts upon the names and tombs of their parents as they lie smouldering in their coffins.

The benevolent actions of earth become at death the flowers of heaven.

The heavenly influences of God's children in life become at death the fragrance of eternity.

As the light-giving rays of the sun appear as darkness to mortals with weak eyes and contracted vision, so in like manner do the searching and light-giving rays of God's Word appear as darkness to those whose mind and mental powers have become weakened through looking into the lovely system of heaven with narrow, preconceived ideas and notions.

Tears are the dewdrops of sorrow; if of heavenly sorrow, they will be the means, as they drop to the earth, of watering seeds that will produce a crop of heavenly joy.

In every cup of sorrow given to us by God to drink there are mixed up in the ingredients fine precious seeds of a higher life, greater joy, and abiding peace to bloom everlastingly in heaven.

Those who dabble in sin stain their hands with indelible ink, which nothing but grace can remove.

Prayer is a pump-handle, and faith the rods and bucket that lift the clear spring of heavenly truth into our earthly vessels to refresh us on the way to Zion.

Hot-tempered and fiery-tempered Christians often expose the nakedness of their souls.

Those people who think that they can go to heaven by indulging in worldly pleasure and sin are travelling in a balloon of their own manufacture, which may carry them high up in the opinion of worldlings, but in reality they are soaring into the freezing atmosphere of God's wrath, to come down with a terrible crash.

A man with a large heart, broad sympathy, but under the influence of a short temper, often burns his fingers; while the man with a narrow soul and an envious disposition has a fire within that will blister his tongue and singe the hair off his head.

Sacred poems and hymns are the million silver steps leading to the heavenly city from every quarter of the globe; and the tunes set to them are the lovely seraphs from the angel-land taking us by the hand to lead us onward and upward to the golden doors studded with diamonds and other precious stones, which are opened to all who have been sanctified and made ready for the indescribable kingdom within.

Death is the postman from the unknown land—except

to those who have seen it by the eye of faith—knocking at our door.

Once or twice we passed several men with shovels in their hands and dressed in garbs that only required a very slight stretch of imagination to make us believe that they were in the Arctic regions searching for the bodies of Sir John Franklin and his noble crew. Suddenly we dropped upon Carlisle, and for a few minutes we pulled ourselves together. As there were no sandwiches to be got, I dined off a penny bun and a sour orange, the rind of which, owing to my benumbed fingers, sorely tried my patience, and in retaliation I set to it with my teeth in a most savage manner, and cast the remnants to the wind to perish in the mud.

We duly arrived at St. Boswell's Station. I felt nearly "done up," and at this place I slipped, rolled, and tumbled into an hotel for a warm rest and a feed. When it was dark I turned out again and made my way by train to Kelso, the place of fame, and noted for its public spirit. As I drew near to the town I could have said with Alfred Miles, in *Young England*, 1880—

> "Louder blew the winds and fiercer,
> The night was drawing nigh."

From the station to the town was a most miserable half-hour's journey, The snow was in heaps, and travellers had to clutch the arms of friends or foes to enable them to "steer a steady course." The snow whistled and squeaked under the pressure of the soles of my feet; for by this time I did not seem to have any other soul. Sometimes I seemed to take one step forward to two backward, till at last a 'busman picked me up and set me down within a hundred yards of the Temperance Hotel door—Mr. Slight's—which was the nearest he could get me to without risk to

life and limb, owing to the great depth of snow. I felt faint, and the full force of what Marianne Farningham says in the *Christian World*—

> "O God, the way is very long,
> And the storms are rough and wild."

Men working in snow, in the blackness of night, beneath the dull, flickering lamps, and with a heavy, foggy atmosphere overhead, present a most curious and interesting spectacle, such as might call forth from nervous, sensitive minds a thousand ghostly wild conjectures about gipsies, witches, &c.

During the evening "mine host" invited me, with some three commercial travellers, to a little family party he was having, numbering altogether some six gentlemen and eight young ladies.

Of the gentlemen I will say nothing except that they were very gentlemanly; but of the young ladies I will say that they were of the usual agreeable mixture. One was charming, another sweet, another was lively, another was delightful, another was pretty, another was pleasant, another was full of grace, and so on. Of course, each had her own peculiar special graces, figure, and colour of hair. Singing, playing, lively and interesting conversation whiled the evening hours away. Notwithstanding these enchanting proceedings, I did not feel happy. I tried hard to put a smile upon my face, but imagined I was not successful, for the company often had to try to "liven me up." The trials and hardships of the day, and my work on the morrow, weighted me heavily with anxiety and sorrow.

I retired to my chamber pensive, sad, and cold. My bed was like ice, and all the clothes, rugs, &c., I had would not make me warm. The night was shiveringly cold, and my heart ached for the poor gipsies out in the

snow. I dozed, winked, and blinked. I got out of bed again and again; and, to while away the long hours of the night, I jotted some of the following aphorisms down, by the side of the dying embers of a *little* fire :—

Sunday-schools are God's flower-beds, upon which He sends more gleams of sunshine and spring showers than upon the rest of the world. Some Sunday-school children are the little roses, pinks, mignonette, &c. There are other Sunday-school children very modest and very good, but with little show; these are the thyme, ladslove, &c. The naughty children are the sour and poisonous weeds.

When a Christian leaves the prospect hill for the marshes and swamps of despondency and gloom, he will soon discover—or ought to do—that he is in the neighbourhood of hellish fogs and mists, which will lead him into worse than the Roman's "shepherd's race," maze, or labyrinth, and from thence to gloomy thoughts and hazy notions of God and His works.

Infidels are the rats of society, puddling and muddling the rippling streams of pure truth that run through our land.

Cold places of worship, with a shivering minister as doorkeeper, are the places to turn warm Christians into freezing saints.

A drunken Christian minister is a toppled-over guide-post with the bottom rotted off, owing to its having being set in too much water.

Hope is the second—love the first—greatest moral force in the world. When a man is down in the gutter it lifts him up; when he is in darkness it puts light in his face and fire in his eyes. It enters the breast of a child; it fills the heart, and is seen in every action of man; it is in the soul of kings, governs empires, and rules destinies; and it lifts human beings, populating all worlds, from earth and hell to heaven. Oh! bliss-inspiring hope!

Hope is the father of ambition and the earthly companion of the soul; they join together till they come to the edge of the river, whence the soul takes its flight into eternity, and hope becomes the life of the fame left behind, and ends with fame's death.

Despair is the wastrel daughter of ambition forsaken by her father, and her mother, hope and pride. She drags all who touch her to poverty, ruin, degradation, misery, and death. When she creeps do you run.

Elevating natural parental love buds in time and blooms through eternity. It turns a mud cottage or gipsy wigwam into a palace, a desert into a garden, a waste into an earthly paradise. It causes the birds and variegated songsters to chirp and sing round your dwelling, the trees to laugh, the stones to shout, the cat to purr upon the hearth, and the children to kiss and fondle upon your knees. It sends whole families where love dwells off to bed in good humour, and causes the cock to crow early in the morning at your door, telling you that a DIVINER LOVE is about to enter your family circle with a fragrance excelling that of the rose, and its effects more lovely to behold than that of the lily.

The soil of earth is the brain of nature.

Children with good hearts and lovable dispositions, under the fostering care of a good, kind, Christian mother, will become God's pretty little singing birds, to beautify and enliven His heavenly garden; while naughty, disobedient, bad children will become worse than rotten eggs, not even fit for manure.

As bells are placed upon the necks of leading wether sheep to give out a sound of danger and guidance, so in like manner is the word of God placed upon the necks of His ministers, to give out words of consolation, counsel, reproof, and warning, and woe be to those who give out an uncertain sound.

Gipsies, vagrants, tramps, and vagabonds are the corns and bunions of society.

Every kind, benevolent act of a Christian, full of love to God and man, is a cask of heavenly oil poured upon the troubled waters of life, and those who go down deep into human misery will find, by looking upward, as the oil of paradise swims upon the waves of woe, the beautiful light of heaven reflected upon their every movement to raise fallen humanity.

The love of God in the heart of man produces a smoothness upon the surface of his face and body that eases his way to heaven through the chilling billows of selfishness, deceit, and fraud.

A cruel retort from an ungrateful son opens a parent's eyes to his sins and follies more than the advice of one hundred friends.

To mount the highest hill of God's favour upon the alternate steps of prayer and good works, with faith as a handrail, is to see the indescribable beauties of heaven and the unsurpassed splendour of earth as no other mortal can; and by climbing higher still we can see more and more, till we find ourselves lost in love and wonder.

The transparent dewdrops of heaven to be seen, by the light of the bright morning sun, resting and twinkling into rainbow colours upon the flowers and blades of grass on the green, mossy carpet, are the lively, sweet, innocent little children whom God sends to cheer and beautify our path for awhile before He calls them to heaven by the absorbing rays of Divine love.

To a good man dark moments are the harbingers of bright days, and to a bad man light moments of excitement are the precursors of long, dark days of sorrow.

Love is the greatest moral force in the world. With the birth of a child it has a beginning, and it is the right hand companion of the soul; and with the death of the

body it is transferred with its redeemed chief to paradise, to be the singing, joyful companion of the soul through endless ages and never-ending delights and pleasures.

Divine love is the celestial life of heaven dwelling in man's breast, purifying his heart, enlivening his soul, transforming his affection to such an extent that he can sing in the midst of a burning, sandy, waterless, parching desert, "Oh! that will be joyful." It transforms the black demon face of a gipsy, or a child of hell, into the lovable, smiling face of a child of God. Its possessor can jump ditches, bound over fences, and scale battlements as easily as if they were level green, mossy carpets. It makes life happy, and opens heaven to our view.

After I had passed through this ordeal, I tried pacing the room with no better results. Notwithstanding these things, I felt as the Rev. Richard Wilton felt when he penned the following lines for *Hand and Heart*, June, 1880:

> "Sufferings are gifts, accept for my sake,
> And from earth's sighs heaven's music shall wake."

Morning dawned and found me with wakeful eyes ready to receive it. After breakfast I began to prepare for my journey through deep snow which had fallen evenly upon the ground to the height of the stone walls. I found that the postman with his cart had begun to prepare for the journey, and he calculated that if all were straight it would take him five hours to "do the eight miles." "Mine host" would not consent to this arrangement, and the next best thing was to hire a horse and trap. So through the deep snow we started. I had not got very far before my muffler was frozen and icicles hung round my beard like little diamonds. A few carts and waggons had been pulled over the snow in places by the farmers, and had left a few tracks. Notwithstanding these our old

hunter was not long before he began to "puff and blow." My gigman said, "I don't know whether we shall be able to get through to Yetholm, but we will go as far as we can. We can but turn back if we can get no further."

Our steed did not require pulling up to stop him. Of his own instinct he stopped pretty frequently. I said to the man, "Our horse seems to be short of "puff." "Yes," said the gigman; "his wind is touched a little, but nothing to hurt. He will be all right if we can once pull through." Sometimes we went into the ditches. How deep they were before the snow fell I don't know. I should think some of them were pretty deep. Thanks to the Almighty, the bottom of our gig would not let us topple over. Many times I began to wonder where we should find a resting-place for the night. I said to my gigman as we went ploughing through the snow in one of the ditches, "In case we get stuck fast, what shall we do next?" "Well," said the gigman, "we shall have to leave the trap behind and return to Kelso as best we can." We shall both have to get upon the horse's back, and if he will not carry us we must take turn and turn about. It won't do to stop on the road to perish." I began to "pump" my gigman in order to know whether I was in the hands of one who understood his business. I wanted my fears settling upon this point.

I said, "How long have you been a coachman?" "Between twenty and thirty years," he said. "And have you ever had a 'spill' or been stuck fast?" "I have only had one 'pitch in' and never a 'spill.'" This news gave me confidence in my man, and on we kept ploughing away. A strong contrast presented itself to our view close to a cottage just off the roadside. There was a fine dark woman with a bright scarlet hood and cloak on her big body, doing something upon one of the hedges. It struck me that she was bird-liming, for the London markets,

the poor linnets that choose to be caged rather than to perish.

The sights along the road were most lively, and I shall never forget it as long as the breath is in my body. The excitement "on the road," the bubbling sympathy within my breast for the poor perishing rabbits, hares, partridges, and crows upon our path, the dangers of the way, and the magnificent grandeur of the scenery, were of such a nature as to cause me to forget the biting cold at work benumbing my nose, fingers, and toes. The Scotch firs in the dales and vales along our path and on the hillsides never appeared more grand and beautiful. They were artistically touched by the hand of God. The pure white lovely prismatic children of the clouds and cold boundless space had descended softly from heaven, as if loth to leave their pure abode for a resting-place in the mud; but before doing so they appeared anxious to adorn the trees of nature with the beauties of ethereal space, and in such a manner as to cause one's heart to glow with gratitude towards God, the Giver of all good. The boughs were bent downwards, heavily laden with the angelic snowflakes; the whole trees presenting a spiral sight, leading your eyes and mind upwards toward heaven. At the extreme tips of the branches the snow had formed a kind of white clapperless bells. As I passed under the heavily-laden trees I felt that I should like to have helped them to bear their burden, and also to keep the prismatic children of the clouds and infinitude from settling into their dirty resting-places. Nature seemed to speak through the beautiful snow-adorned trees, and wintry-capped hills and covered valleys with a warm loving tenderness that I had never experienced before.

Upon the fences the snow had come softly and stealthily down, apparently as if in gentle wavelets, which presented the appearance of fold upon fold, overhanging waves upon

waves in beautiful round and soft designs; and as I behel it I felt for a few minutes that it would be a real pleasure with joy and gladness running through my bones, an smiles forcing themselves upon my face, to roll, plunge tumble, and fluster under its overhanging laps and waved folds, which seemed to speak invitingly, and with open arms, to those who cast a sympathetic glance at them Never in this world did snow appear more to be like the downs of heaven than upon this occasion, notwithstanding the *biting* cold day. On this journey the live things seemed to be dying, while the dead things seemed to be living.

We had now been on the road ploughing away over two hours among the snow, and still we were not at the end of our journey. We had had many escapes of a spill, with the consolation that we should not have been hurt, except in case the iron heels of our beast had come sharply in contact with our almost frost-bitten noses. As we topped the hills and neared Yetholm it was manifest that the rude hand of storm and tempest had been busily at work among the trees at some not very remote period. Hundreds had been uprooted, some of which were left to tell the tale. Not a public-house was to be seen on the way. There was a kind of cabin a little off the roadside, on which was stuck a piece of board, showing that tea, tobacco, coffee, and snuff were sold there. Among the hills in the distance Yetholm was observed. The thought that had run freely through my mind, that I might not reach Yetholm, had now vanished.

The veritable gipsy town was in sight, and our steed pricked up his ears and quickened his pace. The blood which had imperceptibly been freezing in my veins seemed to glow again. The use of my hands and feet seemed to be coming round, and into a public-house I stumbled at half past one to get a cup of tea, "a cheer up," and thorough warming. After which I set out with my bag in



GIPSY WINTER QUARTERS, YETHOLM.—*To face page* 331.

one hand loaded with Testaments, supplied to me by a friend and the Christian Knowledge Society; picture cards, supplied to me by the Religious Tract Society; and *Our Boys and Girls*, supplied to me by the Wesleyan Sunday-School Union; while in the other hand I carried a quantity of oranges and tobacco, purchased from Mr. Laidlaw's, a tradesman in the place. With this "stock-in-trade" for the big and little gipsies at Kirk Yetholm I started my tramp.

The nestling and nuzzling of the gipsy hypocrites beneath the walls of the church at Kirk Yetholm, when they first landed in this country and for centuries onward, is only in accord with their first appearance in many parts of England. There can be no doubt that when the gipsies came from the Continent they came as hypocritical, religious, popish pilgrims, and succeeded well for a time in inveigling themselves into the good graces and pockets of the well-to-do English men and women, so that many of them were able to dress in scarlet and gold till they were found out, as I have shown elsewhere.

Kirk Yetholm, the gipsy town, is about half a mile from Town Yetholm.

By the time I had arrived at the gipsy quarters, owing to my loads, the deep snow, and the slippery nature of the roads in some places, I was ready for a rest.

At the entrance to the village I met a number of little half-starved, dirty, ragged gipsy children, who, to say the least, would require a deal of "straightening up" before they were ready for angelic robes. One little fellow with fine lips, but a mouth almost extending from ear to ear, accosted me in such a manner as to satisfy me that I was, without doubt, in the land of gipsydom. With the exception of the fine old church and one or two houses, the whole presented a miserable appearance. The gipsy dwellings were one story high, and of a dirty dingy white.

Leydon's opinion of the Yetholm gipsies in his day not very high, for he says—

"On Yeta's banks the vagrant gipsies place
Their turf-built cots. A sunburnt swarthy race,
From Nubian realms their tawny line they bring,
And their brown chieftain vaunts the name of king.
With loitering steps from town to town they pass,
Their lazy dames rock'd on the panier'd ass,
From pilfer'd roots or nauseous carrion fed,
By hedgerows green they strew their leafy bed;
While scarce the cloak of tawdry red conceals
The fine-turned limbs which every breeze reveals.
Their bright black eyes through silken lashes shine,
Around their necks their raven tresses twine;
But chilling damps and dews of night impair
Its soft sleek gloss and tan the bosom bare.
Adroit the lines of palmistry to trace,
Her horded silver store they charm away,
A pleasing debt for promised wealth to pay."

Slater says in his Directory for 1882 that "To Yetholm and Kirk Yetholm are both very humble appearance, especially the latter, which is chiefly inhabi by gipsies, a race formerly remarkable for their disorde lives and dangerous characters, and at this day d tinguished by peculiarity of habits from the general b of the community."

Dr. Baird says in his "Memoir of the Rev. John Bair written some twenty years ago, "A colony of gips which had long been settled at Kirk Yetholm had gi rather an unenviable notoriety to the village, and r dered its name familiar to thousands in Scotland. T great majority of this wandering race were little bet than heathens though born in a Christian land, and w notorious for poaching, thieving, and blackguardism."

Most of the gipsy dwellings belong to a friend, t Marquis of Tweeddale, and he has of late years tak steps to improve their appearance. At the present ti

I am told the gipsy dwellings, so far as the outsides are concerned, show a great improvement. Sad to relate, the gipsy tenants have not improved one jot. Landlords may make gipsies' and labourers' houses—and it is right they should—healthy and habitable, but estate agents cannot purify the moral iniquity that dwells within. The schoolmaster, law, and the gospel are the agents for this reforming work.

I was told by Mr. Laidlaw that a gipsy named Mathew Blythe was the most respectable gipsy in Yetholm, and would give me any information; so to Mathew I made my way. I knocked at his door and was met with a shout, "Come in." I did not stand knocking twice after this invitation, and went through the dingy, greasy passage—or "entrance hall"—to another door, which I opened, and there found a round-faced, grey-haired, good-looking, cobbling gipsy at work upon his "last." The room seemed to serve for kitchen, scullery, parlour, dining-room, sitting-room, bedroom, closet, and workshop. For a minute or two he eyed me over from head to foot before asking me to sit down on a rickety old chair that stood by my side. I told him that I was come to look up the gipsies at Yetholm. I was met with a gruff reply, "There are no gipsies at Yetholm; they are all gone away, and I don't know where they are gone to." I said, "I am sorry for that, as I had brought some books, oranges, tobacco, pictures, and coppers for them." And after a few words in Romany the old man turned up his face with a smile and said, "Well, to speak the truth, I am a gipsy, but my old woman is not. Sit you down." I sat down and began my tale, and told him who I was and all about the object of my visit. At this the old man opened his eyes wider and wider and said, "Lord, bless you, me and my brother, who lives at Town Yetholm, were only talking about you yesterday, and saying how glad we should be to see you.

Let's shake hands." He took hold of my hand and g
it a good grip and a squeeze, one that I shall not soon
get. I said, "I suppose you wanted to see me in orde
give me a 'good tanning,' or else to make the pl
warm for me; for I have been told by a backwood gi
writer at —— that the gipsies in Scotland would make
hot for me if they once got hold of me; and this is o
among the many other reasons, why I am here to-da
"Those," said Mr. Blythe, "who told you that tale t
you a lie. I don't know any gipsy who would hurt y
little finger. You have said some hard things about
but they are true, or nearly so. Why should not
children be educated like other people's children? W
should gipsy children not be allowed to sit on the sa
bench with the rest? They are the same flesh and blo
and God looks upon them the same as He does upon ot
children. In church and in school no one will come n
to us, and what is the result? Why, there is not a gi
in all the place—and there are between one and
hundred—except myself who goes to church on Sunda
The gipsies in Yetholm are worse off to-day than t
ever were. Some are in receipt of parish relief." T
upsets the romantic tales of the gipsy writers who maint
that gipsies never receive parish relief. "A few of
children can read and write, but that is all. I learned
read and write a many years, thank God, and I s
learnt to make and mend shoes." I said, "What
the gipsies do and where do they wander, as they g
up? "They," said Mr. Blythe, "generally goes to to
or travels the country, and nobody knows where they
their days." Mr. Blythe was some distant—"nine
second cousin"—relation to the notorious dare-devil gip
Will Faa, who claimed to be a sort of a gipsy king, s
on this account I wanted to have a few words about
gipsy kings of Scotland. "Well," said Mr. Blythe, "

know better than I can tell you that there are no such beings as gipsy kings and queens. It is all bosh and nonsense, conjured up to get money on the cheap. The woman they call the gipsy queen does not live at Yetholm now, she has gone to live at Kelso. I could not tell you whereabouts she lives, but in some of the back streets."

Mr. Blythe began to relate some of the gipsy tales; and how many kings' lives the gipsies had saved, and a number of other things relating to gipsy life, into which I had not time to enter, as I wanted to be on the road again with my gigman before it was dark. The old man's crippled foot prevented him making some visits with me to the other gipsies in the village, or, as he said, "I should have been only too glad to have done so. The poor things want somebody looking after them, I can assure you." I emptied nearly the whole of the contents of my bags of books, pictures, tobacco, oranges, and a few coppers upon the gipsy cobbler's bench, among the awls, nails, waxed-ends, &c., for him to distribute, as a *man*, among the gipsy children and old women in the village; and as a *man*, and with gipsy greetings and good wishes, trusting to Mr. Blythe's honour, I left them, and they have, with God's blessing, no doubt been distributed. After a few words of cheer and consolation and several shakes of the hands, which somehow brought out my weakness in tears, I bade Mr. Blythe, the grey-haired, open-faced gipsy, "good-bye," maybe never to meet again on this side of Jordan. I felt as I stepped out of the door that I could have said with a blind writer in the *Church of England Magazine*—

> "Though dark and dreary be my way,
> Thy light can turn my night to day."
>
> "Pensive I tread my sad and lonely road,
> Pain, gloom, and sorrow marked me for their prey."

I took a stroll through the place to eye the gipsy dwellings

over, and by the time I had got to the bridge homeward, a number of poor half-starved gipsy children had gathered round me. I had not gone far before I met some bigger gipsies "working *home*" for the night. I thought I would have five minutes' chat in the snow with a little old gipsy woman named Sanderson, who had accosted me in the usual gipsy fashion, viz., a curtsy and "Your honour, sir." I pulled up and deposited my bags in the snow. At this the old woman began to smile; she no doubt thought that she had succeeded in her first step to draw something from me. She was not long in perceiving that I was not a Scotchman, and took pains to tell me her name, and that she was an English gipsy from the neighbourhood of Newcastle. It occurred to me that I would just for once try the old woman's volubility of thanks, and accordingly I dipped into my bag for an orange; this brought the old woman almost upon her knees with a "Thank yer honour;" each "thanks" was accompanied by low curtsies. I next pulled out a picture card; this she put to her breast and said, "Lord bless yer honour." I gave her another card, for which she responded with upturned eyes, "May the Lord bless you, my dear good gentleman." I next gave her some coppers; she again turned up her eyes toward heaven and said with a smile, "May you never want a friend in the world." I next gave her some tobacco, to which she responded, "May the dear Lord thank you a thousand times." I ran through all the varieties I had, without exhausting her stock of thanks. I began to think that I must "give it up." I believe Nisbets, Sunday School Union, Hodder and Stoughton, Partridge, Religious Tract Society, Christian Knowledge Society, and all the wide world-known first class publishing houses in Paternoster Row—and over London there are many of them—would not produce variety of picture books enough to exhaust the different kind of thanks the

old gipsy woman had in store; at any rate she would have a curtsy for the last and one to spare for the next gift. I had a Testament in my bag, and as a last present I thought I would give it to her. The old woman took it out of my hand as a hungry starving child takes a piece of bread, with more eagerness than she had shown over either the money or the tobacco, and clasped it to her breast and called out with tears in her eyes in an attitude of prayer, "May the dear Lord Jesus bless you, my dear good gentleman, so long as you shall live, and may you never want a friend." Tears and curtsies came again pretty freely, I shook hands with the old gipsy, and we parted. The rimy moisture on my spectacles, and the hastiness of my movements prevented me testing the old gipsy woman's tears, to see whether they were genuine or not. I rather think they were; at any rate it is more pleasant to human nature to have smiles than frowns, even if they come from the devil.

I jumped into the trap, put on a warm muffler, and jolted and jogged for some two hours to my lodgings, passing some gipsy poachers on the way, and watching the growing moon in the heavens facing me, which seemed to speak words of consolation showing unmistakably that all was not darkness in the temporary Arctic cold regions in the world of gipsydom.

In Kelso I found out that one of the *princes* of gipsydom had been in jail nearly a score of times; in fact, one of the magistrates told me that he himself had sent one of the gipsy vagabonds to jail something like half a dozen times during the last two years. As a rule, when his "*highness*" was not in jail, he was employed scraping the streets, scavenging, or getting a penny in other ways. In the train I was told that one of the *queens* of gipsydom indulged in language which would not be a sufficient passport to heaven, and was at the present time to outside

observers a poor, miserable old woman, with one foot in the grave, a standing lie to the advantages, blessings, and beauties of an uncivilized, demoralizing, wandering vagabond's life.

A portrait of one of the self-crowned Scottish gipsy queens, Esther Faa Blythe, is here given. The old woman is eighty-five years of age, and has an eye to business. She is sharp, and can adapt herself to all circumstances. With the saints she becomes heavenly, and so on, almost through the whole of the lights, shades, and phases of social life.

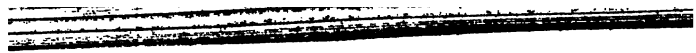
There are numbers of "gipsy kings" and "queens" in the country—aye, almost in every county; at any rate those who are simple enough to believe in them say so. One gipsy queen not long ago used to dress in dashing, gaudy silks, and sit in "a chair of state" in her van, and the Londoners paid their threepennies to see her from time to time. She now lives a "retired life," upon her gains, at Maidenhead.

The best gipsy queen I know of is the good Christian woman, Mrs. Simpson—formerly a Lee—at Notting Hill, who has become a devoted, good Christian woman, and tries to do all the good she can as she passes up and down the world. Her Bible contains her "state records," which are the guide of her life. For twenty years she did a "roaring trade" by telling fortunes to simpletons and big babies out of the Bible—upside-down at times—of which she could not tell a letter. Since she has been a *gipsy Christian queen* she has learnt to read some parts of the blessed book. My plan, if followed out thoroughly in all its details, will make all our gipsies "kings" and "queens." It is surprising that there are people in the world silly enough even at this late day to believe in such beings as the "gipsy kings" and "queens" of backwood romance.

To come back to Yetholm. The aches, pains, and wild



ESTHER FAA BLYTHE—A SCOTCH GIPSY QUEEN.—*To face page* 32



visions of the night carried me almost over the wide, wide world, and had it not been for the power of Divine love and the rays of heavenly light I cannot tell where I might have got to ere this.

"The rougher the way, the shorter the stay,"

said Wesley. I paid my bill, and started homeward, and at St. Boswell's station I made the acquaintance of Thomas Webster, Esq., and his two sweet, interesting little sons, Masters Thomas Scott Cliff and Harold Colin, of Oxenden Towers, Dunse. In the train we sat together, and chatted and whiled away time almost imperceptibly for several hours as we journeyed southward. At Hillfield we separated. He and his sons travelled westward, and I kept speeding along southward and homeward, I think a wiser man; certainly I know more of the gipsies in Scotland and at Yetholm than I ever knew before. I find, among other things, that there are a number of gipsies living among the rocks on the northern coasts of Scotland, more like wild animals than human beings, and as shaggy as winter-coated goats.

My visit to Yetholm brought out the fact more vividly to my mind than ever, that private flickering and fluttering missionary enterprise, apart from compulsory education, sanitation, and proper Government supervision, is powerless, and unable to reclaim our gipsies and their children from heathendom and its black midnight surroundings; and this I have stated all along in my letters, Congress papers, articles in the *Graphic* and *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, and in my "Gipsy Life," &c. The case of the poor brickyard girls and boys and canal children proves this in an unmistakable manner beyond all doubt; at any rate, to those who have their eyes and ears open, and hearts and hands ready to help forward the country's welfare.*

* On March the 5th, within three months of my visit to Yetholm, Mr. Laidlaw writes me to say that the Yetholm gipsies are taking to

Some fifty years ago the Rev. John Baird, a godly minister at Yetholm, and a few warm-hearted friends, commenced in right good earnest to reform the gipsies at Yetholm. A committee was formed, several hundreds of pounds were collected, steps taken to get the gipsy children to school, and for some years they issued encouraging reports concerning the gipsies. Plenty of proofs were forthcoming to show that the gipsy children could be made meet for heaven by the application of the laws of education, sanitation, and the gospel; they were, as a rule, as well conducted in school and church as other labouring-class children. In course of time the missionary zeal of the committee began to flag, and Mr. Baird handed them over to the magistrates, and he goes on to say: "Take the more respectable individual, and let him follow the occupation of the gipsy, and in a few years he will in all probability be as bad as any of them. It is almost folly and ignorance to say that a wandering gipsy may be a respectable character. The thing seems to be possible and, theoretically, not improbable; but practically the wandering gipsy is almost without exception a disreputable person. His wandering life leads to innumerable evils. In kindness to themselves, therefore, their occupation, were it even a useful one to society, should be put down; but it is not only useless, but positively injurious to themselves and others. Their life is one of petty crime; their death involved in all the gloom of ignorance and despair."

What are the results to-day of the years of toil and the hundreds of pounds which have been spent upon the gipsy children at Yetholm? Only one gipsy is to be found

settled and constant employment at the farmers' in the neighbourhood. This is cheering news, and shows most clearly that my plans will work out rightly, as I have told the gipsies at Yetholm and other places, without any inconvenience to them worth naming.

going to church on Sundays. And whose fault is it? Certainly not the gipsy children's, nor yet that of Mr. Baird and his friends, but that of the State and the country. Mr. Baird gave proof that education had made some gipsy children into useful servants and good citizens; and why not more? Would to God that our noble Queen, our statesmen, and our philanthropists would listen to the gipsy children's cry which has been going upward to heaven from our doors during the last three hundred and sixty-eight years, and is still unheard and unheeded by the Christians of England. Their tears, instead of softening our hearts, have turned them into icicles, sneers, and frozen sympathies, and the devilish, sensual gipsy novelists have transformed the bright lively looks of the girls into wicked designs and immoral purposes. Every retarding act and backward movement of those who would keep the poor gipsy children in ignorance will be a thorn in their pillow at the close of life, as the crest of the eternal wave appears in view with savage, bewildering reality. It is a serious thing to drag women and children downhill, and it is one that will not be banished by the artistic touches of dark, sensual, misleading gipsy romance, however finely drawn and dexterously spun.

The Yetholm gipsies, living, roosting, and nestling in their degrading, demoralizing, and squalid manner, have, during the last three centuries, from beneath the shadow of the sacred parish church and within the sound of its heavenly chimes, sent forth into England, Scotland, and the world over two thousand dark missionaries, trained in all the crimes of sin and wrong-doing, to spread misery and moral and eternal death on every hand, without our ever putting out our hands as a nation to arrest or sweeten the stream of iniquity which has been floating by our doors for so long. Good Lord, wake us all up from our sleep of moral death into which we are falling, bound

hand and foot by selfish interests—money, greed, sensual pleasures, and fascinating delights.

Gipsying in this country comes up before us in various forms, enough to send a cold, thrilling shudder through one's nature. A friend whom I know well, in Leicester, told me only the other day that one of her distant relations at Greetham, in Rutlandshire, had SOLD, some year or so ago, his dark-eyed and dark-haired pretty girl of about twelve summers to a gang of gipsies for TWO SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE AND A GALLON OF BEER, and the poor lost creature is now tramping and travelling the country, no one knows where. This poor girl's mother is living in comfortable service in Leicester. One can hardly imagine a husband and wife, father and mother, so utterly lost to all natural feeling as to sell their child for half a crown ; but so it is, and no doubt she is making money for the gipsy scoundrels and inhuman brutes. My heart often bleeds for the little lost gipsy girl, concerning whom slap-dash gipsy song-writers can call forth thrills of momentary pleasurable excitement from sensual gipsy admirers as they pass round the "loving cup."

I often wonder what kind of song it is the poor child's inhuman mother sings to while away the pleasurable duties of her station and the silent hours of the night; and while her offspring lies like a dog crouched on a heap of straw, half starved, dressed in rags, filth, and vermin, in some tent at the bottom of some dark lane by the side of a wood, listening with wide-open eyes to the screeching of game and weazels, the howling of the wind, and the beating of the hail and rain against her thin midnight shelter from stormy blasts.

While in Scotland a friend told me that recently he was in a hairdresser's shop, and while he was undergoing shampooing and a scenting process, a poor, half-frozen, half-naked, Scotch gipsy girl, with dishevelled hair, came,

with a small tin can in her hand, begging with tears in her eyes for some hot water. My friend was struck with the poor gipsy girl's sorrowful, soul-mourning condition and request, and he asked her what she wanted the hot water for. "Please, my good gentleman," said the girl, tremblingly, "my mother's hair is frozen to the ground, and I want a little hot water to loosen it with. Mother can't get up till it is loosened, and there is no one else in the tent to fetch the water and to get her up but me, sir." What a tale of sorrow did the poor child relate. How sadly true is this of the gipsies and show people, and other travelling children all over our highly favoured and heavenly exalted country to-day. Our gipsies, by their own wrong-doings, lying, thieving, poaching, cheating, fortune-telling, idleness, profanity, sabbath-breaking, and other deadly sins, have bound themselves to the ground under our eyes, and we have stood by with our hands in our pockets, winking, blinking, and chuckling at their heartrending condition. Some thirty thousand gipsy children have, for the last three hundred and fifty years, received from door to door cuffs, kicks, crumbs, crusts, smiles, curses, and flattery, but have never, except in a flickering way, had extended to them the hand of practical help and sympathy. They have lived on our commons, in our lanes, by the side of our woods, in our dark, black alleys, in our prisons and workhouses. The little seedlings of hope that God has planted in the breasts of the poor gipsy children, we have, instead of encouraging them, trampled upon, and the little tender buds and blades as they peeped forth we have trodden down.

The children are lying and dying in the mud, with none to deliver. As a result of our negligence and indifference to the wants of the poor gipsy child, we shall some day have a crop of thistles, hard, sharp, and strong, difficult to handle and more difficult to uproot, think about it

lightly as we may. The cries of the gipsy children have filled the earth, and reached heaven for help; but we have barred the school doors against them, and locked in their faces the gates through which they should have been led to health, prosperity, civilization, Christianity, and heaven. Gipsy women's wails and gipsy children's cries are going upward and upward; and to-day the gipsy, show, and canal children are at our doors dressed in rags and dirt, with matted hair, and tears in their eyes, beseeching us to take them into our embraces and soul-saving institutions, to lead them heavenward and to God, and still we refuse to listen to their entreaties. Shall we refuse to do so any longer? God grant that there may be a speedy breaking of bars, bolts, and locks that have bound our gipsies, show people, and their children to their debasing customs, and that our noble Queen, Senators, and Law-givers may open the doors of the blessed institutions with which our seagirt isle is covered to our gipsies and their children without one moment's delay, before our candle-stick is removed and glory departed.

The Englishmen of our England of to-day have it within their power to show to the world how to improve the condition of the gipsy and canal children as no other nation has ever had before, without trampling under foot liberty and civil rights. Shall we with folded hands stand by with the blood of the canal and gipsy children hanging upon our garments, with awful effect, while the lambs of Christ's flock are groping their way to misery, ruin, and woe? Shall we put out our hand to save the children? It is for my countrymen to answer "Yes" or "No."

I asked my friend John Harris, the Cornish poet, to kindly help on the cause of the gipsy children, and right gladly he did it; and here is his touching poem. May it sink deep into our hearts!

"ZUTILLA.

"THE day is done, Zutilla,
And yonder shines a star;
Our camp is on the moorlands,
From busy homes afar.
No church bells murmur near us,
No echoes from the town,
And o'er the lonely common
The night comes slowly down.

"Zutilla, thou art dying!
Once by the riverside
Our tents stood in the sunshine
Upon the wasteland wide.
Then thou wert but a baby,
So beautiful and bright;
I kissed thee in my gladness,
And wept with fond delight.

"Came from the leafy hollow,
A man with hoary hair;
His voice was soft as summer,
When lilies scent the air:
This Book he gave, Zutilla,
Against our hour of need,
Which surely is the present;
But oh! we cannot read.

"How pale thou art, Zutilla!
I fear thy hour is come.
Is there a God of mercy?
And will He take thee home?
This Book might tell us plainly
Now in our hour of need,
Not having any teacher:
But oh! we cannot read.

"Gone, gone art thou, Zutilla!
My tears shall flow for thee,
A gipsy's darling daughter,
The sun and moon to me.
Thy mother's heart is breaking,
'Tis well it thus should bleed;
For nothing gives me comfort,
Now in my hour of need.

"I know not how to utter
One word of prayer to Him!
Will no one teach the gipsy,
Whose life and death are dim?
Come, come to us, ye upright,
Who walk this favoured sod,
And teach us from your Bible,
And tell us of your God.

"Yes, I am old and feeble,
And sinks life's flickering spark.
Oh! thousands of my people
Are dying in the dark!
The gipsy children perish,
Like mine, before my eyes:
O come, O come, and teach us
The passage to the skies!

"My wakeful eyes are burning,
My soul is rocked with dread:
O England, rouse thee! rouse thee!
And hasten to the dead.
If thou wilt do thy duty,
Another light shall gleam
Upon the gipsy's tent-tops
Our fathers have not seen."

God (*Doovel*) bless (*párik*) the (*o*) brickfield (*chíkino-tan*), boat (*paanéngro*), and (*Ta*) gipsy women (*joóvyaw*) and (*Ta*) children (*chaviés*), and (*Ta*) may (*Te*) their (*lénti*) tears (*tchingar*) be (*vel*) noticed (*lel-veéna*) and (*Ta*) help (*kair-posh*) come (*avél*) from (*avri*) heaven (*mi-dúvelsko*) and (*Ta*) my (*meéro*) country (*tem*). So (*Ajáw*) be (*vel*) it (*les*), and more (*kómi*).

NOTE.

In response to the canal and gipsy children's prayers, cries, and tears, the only answer coming as yet is as follows: With the assistance of the Government, represented by the Right Hon. Sir Charles Dilke, M.P., President of the Local Government Board; the Right Hon. A. J. Mundella, M.P., Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education; J. T. Hibbert, Esq., M.P., Parliamentary

Secretary to the Local Government Board, Mr. Burt, M.P., introduced the Canal Boats Act (1877, 46 Vict.) Amendment Bill on April 9th, 1883, and it was read the first time. When the Bill came on for the second reading on April 18th, Mr. Salt, M.P. for Stafford, met it with a "blocking" amendment as follows: "After the second reading of the Canal Boats Act (1877) Amendment Bill, to move that it be referred to the Select Committee on Canals." *The Daily News* in a leader states: "Mr. Salt intends to move that the Canal Boats Act (1877) Amendment Bill be referred to a Select Committee. The motion, if carried, would shelve this useful and unpretending Bill for another session." I was in the Speaker's gallery, and saw with sorrowful pangs Mr. Salt move his successful check to the Bill. This was no sooner done than Mr. P. A. Taylor, M.P. for Leicester, took his hat off to "scotch" the further progress of the Bill. Notwithstanding the entreaties of Earl Stanhope, Mr. W. E. Forster, M.P., Mr. Pell, M.P., myself and others, Mr. Salt refused to drop his "blocking" amendment, although Mr. Salt and Mr. Taylor knew full well that any amendment they might propose when the Bill is in Committee before the "House" would be considered. Later on Mr. Warton, M.P. for Bridport, put his universal block on, as he always does when measures for the country's welfare come to the front and are likely to pass into law. In the week commencing April 30, 1883, no less than twenty-nine "blocks" had emanated from this "honourable member's" brain to be placed against the legislative action of Parliament for the country's good.

On Friday, April 27th, the *Daily Telegraph*, in a leader, states Mr. Algernon Egerton, M.P. for Wigan, has "blocked" the Canal Boats Act Amendment Bill brought forward by Mr. Burt on behalf of Mr. George Smith, of Coalville.

It seems inexplicable that Mr. Taylor, who, as a Member of the "House," helped me to get the Brickyard Act of 1871 and the Canal Boats Act of 1877 passed, should at the last moment take steps to prevent the success of the Act of 1877 which my Amending Bill would bring about, and with but little cost or inconvenience to all parties. Both Mr. P. A. Taylor and Mr. Salt are friends to the cause I have in hand—at least I hope so; but to check the Bill was a backward move.

To turn aside the Christianizing and civilizing institutions of the country from exerting their influence upon 60,000 poor canal and gipsy children is no light undertaking. It cannot be the cause of the poor canal and gipsy children that they wish to throw cold water upon, but upon my unworthy self, who has had the audacity, against immense odds and under tremendous difficulties, to take the

cause of the brickyard, canal, and gipsy children in hand. Time and patience weave trials into pleasures and difficulties into crowns.

In the meantime the children's cries are going east, west north, and south, upward and heavenward for help. Shall it be given? They are more in need of it by far than the children of other working classes. Oh, that a speedy answer may come, and the children delivered from the vortex of ruin and the jaws of death by the hand of the most enlighted Government in the world!

APPENDIX.

MY PLANS EXPLAINED AND OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

To illustrate more fully the plans I suggest for improving the condition of the canal, gipsy, and other travelling children, and to bring to the surface all the weak as well as the strong points which the working out might reveal, I cannot do better, I think, than introduce my readers to an imaginary large gathering of my friends, with a real object in hand, in one of the committee rooms at the House of Commons, which list of friends, including Lord Aberdare, Lord Aberdeen, Lord Stanhope, Sir Charles Dilke, M.P., Mr. J. T. Hibbert, M.P., Mr. Mundella, M.P., Mr. Alexander McArthur, M.P., Mr. W. H. Wills, M.P., Mr. A. Pell, M.P., Mr. Salt, M.P., Mr. Thomas Burt, M.P., Mr. Frank A. Bevan, will be found in my previous works, and earlier in this, together with many other valuable friends and well-wishers to the cause of the poor neglected brickyard, canal, and gipsy children. Their names will ever be remembered and spoken of by me with the profoundest respect. They are names that stand high in the legislative, literary, press, philanthropic, social, and religious annals of our country, irrespective of creed, sect, or party; and nothing, had space been at my disposal, would have given me greater pleasure than that of showing my gratitude to them by placing all their names upon these pages.*

Question 1. "Would you explain to us more fully than you have

* I am much indebted to Mr. Joyce, Mr. F. W. Chesson, Mr. George Bettany, Rev. A. E. Gregory, Mr. H. E. Duke, Mr. T. S. Townend, Mr. A. Mallett, Mr. Gay, Mr. Fisher, Mr. Lucy, Messrs. Joshua and Joseph Hatton, Mr. Stark, Mr. D. Gorrie, Mr. R. W. Boyle, Mr. Saunders, Mr. Robins. Emma Leslie, Mr. S. R. Bennett, Mr. B. G. Burleigh, Rev. W. L. Lang, Mr. J. Moore, Mr. J. B. Marsh, Mr. J. D. Shaw, Mr. J. H. Thomas, Mr. Kinnear, Rev. B. Burrows, Mr. G. J. Stevenson, M.A., Mr. Tod, Rev. Mark Guy Pearse, L. T. Meade, Rev. Chas. Bullock, Mr. F. Sherlock, Rev. Ernest Boys, Dr. Grosart, Mr. A. Locker, Rev. R Spears, Mr. B. Clarke, Mr. James Clarke, Mr. Claydon, Mr. W. Binns, Mr. E. Walford, M.A., Mr. Lobb, Rev. Mr. Duncan, Messrs. Morgan and Scott, Mr. Jean, Mr. Albery, Rev. B. Waugh, Dr. Parker. Mr. G. A. Sala, Mr. Bradshaw, Mr. Lloyd, Dr. Westy Gibson, and many others upon the Press.

done in your Congress papers and "Gipsy Life," the plans you refer to for bringing about an improvement in the condition of the gipsy and other travelling children?"

In the first place, as I have previously stated, all the vans and other temporary movable dwellings should be registered in a manner analogous to that provided under the Canal Boats Act of 1877. The certificate to be renewable annually at any of the Urban or Rural Sanitary Authorities in the country, the owner of the tent or van paying a sum of ten shillings per annum; to be equally divided between the local authorities and the Local Government Board.

Question 2. "Will you explain to us how the ten shillings is to be collected and divided between the government and the local authorities?"

I would propose that the five shillings paid to the Government should be paid in the form of a charge upon each certificate; or, in other words, each certificate of registration should be stamped with a five shilling stamp, and collected by the Government as the other stamps are collected. The other five shillings should be kept by the local authorities for their trouble and expense in the matter.

Question 3. "How do you propose dealing with the fines?"

The fines should be handed over to the local sanitary authorities, who, I suggest, with the sanction of the Local Government Board, should enforce the Act.

Question 4. "How would you meet the case of a man who, with his family, is at the end of the year, when his annual certificate expires, a hundred miles away from the place where he obtained his certificate of registration?"

I will try to illustrate my meaning in this way. Suppose that a man registered his van at Tunstall, Staffordshire, in the first instance, say, on January, 1883, but during the year he had wandered all over the country almost, and on January, 1884, he was at Northampton with his van and family. I propose that he should take his last certificate of registration to the sanitary authority at Northampton and get it renewed. This plan works out right in the case of hawkers. Of course, the van would have to be brought to the officers, or at any rate, it would have to be where it could be inspected.

Question 5. "You say in your Congress papers that the certificate should be taken on the first of January in each year. Now suppose a man wanted to register his van in October, would the owner be required to pay the sum of ten shillings for the remaining two months of the year, and then be required to take out another certificate on the following January?"

According to the plan sketched out in my Congress paper it would be so; but on further consideration it would, I think, be much

more simple, fair, and easy if the certificates were taken out for a a year at any time or place the owner thought fit to apply for them.

Question 6. "Will you explain why it is that you think the certificates of registration should be renewed annually? Would it not be sufficient if the vans and temporary miserable dwellings were registered only once?"

No, I do not think it would. Vans, as in the case of canal boats, often change hands, and to keep an oversight of and be able to trace the vans through all their changes would require a lot of official and intricate machinery to be set in motion which would not be needful if the certificates of registration were taken out every year. Every application for a certificate or a renewal of a certificate would bring the owner to the front. The changes taking place during the year could be endorsed upon the back of the certificate, and with the transfer of the van I would hand over the certificate of registration in force to the new owner.

Question 7. "What is the advantage to be gained by registration?"

Registration is the first step towards the advantages that are to follow. By registration the owners and occupiers of the vans are known, and the School Board officers and sanitary inspectors have the initial powers to bring their influences to bear upon the children growing up without education. The gipsies and other travellers as a rule pass through the country under so many different names that unless the vans are registered and their owners known it would be impossible to carry out the reforms that are needed. I have not found one traveller who would object to their vans being registered, provided it could be brought about in an easy and inexpensive manner.

Question 8. "Do you not think that ten shillings per annum would be a heavy tax upon the gipsies and other travellers?"

Not if we take into account that poor people living in houses have to pay rates and taxes to a much greater amount than I propose that travellers should be called upon to pay for their certificates. In fact, they will be much the gainers if my system of a free education for the gipsy, canal, and other travelling children be carried out. For the ten shillings they would, as a rule, receive more than thirty shillings in educational advantages and remission of school fees.

Question 9. "How will the sanitary and other authorities know, as the vans pass through the country, whether they have been registered or not without the inspectors putting the owners to unnecessary inconvenience and annoyance?"

I propose that the name of the owner, the place where the van was registered, and the number of the certificate should be painted on the vans and other temporary and movable dwellings.

Question 10. "Do you not think that the travellers and gipsies would be much inconvenienced by having to register their vans every year?"

No, not if they were habitable, and in a fair condition in other ways. It would not require more than an hour once a year. The forms and certificates would only take a few minutes to fill up.

Question 11. "How do you propose bringing about the education of the gipsy and other travelling children?"

I would do as I have proposed in my "Gipsy Life" and Congress papers, viz., establish a free educational pass book, which book should not cost the parents more than one shilling, and on the plan set forth in my "Canal Adventures by Moonlight," p. 162. The pass book would do for all the children living in the van or canal boat, and the child or children presenting it to any schoolmaster connected with any properly organized public school would claim at his hands a free education for so long a time as they presented themselves for admission. With the system of pass books there will not be the difficulties that would have been created by the pass-book system in the village dame school days of yore. Day schools, as you know, are now conducted upon the standard and code system. I will try to illustrate how the plan would work out in practice. Opposite my room windows across the green, all last week was an old tumble-down van in which there was a man, his wife, and seven children. Five of the children were of school age—none of them could tell a letter; but, supposing that Tom was in the First Standard, Betty in the Second, Bill in the Third, Polly in the Infants', and Jack in the Fourth Standards, these classifications and particulars would be entered in the pass book, and supposing that the gipsy had sent the children with their pass book to the National School on his arrival in the village, the schoolmaster would immediately he had opened the book have seen to which standard each child belonged, and would have sent him or her into it.

Question 12. "Do you not think that it will cause the schoolmaster extra trouble; and how do you propose to meet this difficulty?"

I have talked to several schoolmasters upon the subject, and they think that all attendances of travelling children should be entered and paid for at the rate of those children who pass their examinations. Each child who passes the usual examinations costs the country about tenpence per week, and I have been told by schoolmasters that if this sum was forthcoming from the Government for the gipsy and travelling children—which is the system I propose to meet the case of the canal children—they would gladly receive them into their schools; or, in other words, the Government must pay the schoolmaster one penny for each attendance, which should be entered in

his school returns to the Education Department; the same course in some respects which is taken with pauper children.

Question 13. "What plans do you propose for granting the gipsy and canal children their certificates of qualification?"

I would propose that the children should be allowed to present themselves at any school for an examination at the usual time; *i.e.*, provided they had made two hundred attendances during the year, and that such attendances had been duly entered in pass books and signed by the schoolmasters at whose schools the children had attended; or that they satisfied the school attendance officers or School Board authorities, wherever their vans were registered, that the gipsy children were being educated privately, or in other ways to their satisfaction.

Question 14. "Do you not think that there will be much difficulty in getting the children to make two hundred attendances during the year?"

No. As a rule, all travelling vans, canal boats, and other miserable dwellings are not on the move more than half the time. Frequently they will stay for weeks together in one place. And I would also, to enable the children to make their number of attendances, reckon two attendances in a Sunday-school equal to one day-school attendance.

Question 15. "Do you not think that parents of town children will object to their sitting by the side of gipsy and canal children?"

In some instances the parents might object to it, as you say, but generally they would not. I think that two-thirds of the children now travelling the country are the children of parents who once followed town and settled employments. If the children I want to introduce to the day schools throughout the country had been gipsy children of past years, with all their evil habits manifested at every step of their lives, I can imagine that strong objection would be raised against their introduction to English school life. Our present gipsy children are, as a rule, our travelling gutter children. I think that the mixing of the travelling children with the town children at school will be one of the first steps towards bringing them back to civilized usages and habits. At the present time gipsy and canal children are the outcasts of society, unknown and unrecognized by others, except by those of their own kith and kin. The mother has at the present time no object to "dress up her children for." With its introduction to school, natural instincts, parental feelings, love, and hope are brought once more into action, and generally the natural consequence will be that the mother will send her children to school as clean and well dressed as other children are. To have separate schools for canal and gipsy children will not be a workable plan. Sometimes for weeks the teacher would scarcely have anything to do; gipsies especially fluctuate very much.

Question 16. "We should be glad if you could give us additional reasons and facts, and explain a little more to us why you think that vans should be registered annually, or at any rate have their certificates renewed."

In the first place, I would say that the non-annual registration was, and is so still, one of the principal causes why the Canal Boats Act of 1877 is not so satisfactory as desired. The children living in canal boats under the Act of 1877 really belong to the place at which the boats are registered. This is as it should be, and I want the principle of localizing or identifying the canal children with some place extended to all travelling children living in vans; but that identification must give the parents a choice of selecting other districts or localities from time to time as changes of circumstances and other things might require. Under the present system, when once the boat is registered at a place, the children, under the Act of 1877, belong to that place till they are past school age, and no provision is made under the Act for changes which often occur in a boatman's life, or would occur in a gipsy's life. I will try to illustrate my meaning more clearly by taking a case in point as regards the carrying out of the Canal Boats Act, which would apply with equal force to children living in vans. When the Canal Boats Act of 1877 came into operation, either through the strictness or laxity of other registration authorities, more than eight hundred canal boatmen and boat-owners from all parts of the country applied to the Runcorn registration authorities to have their boats registered. Of course they registered the boats, and obtained the five-shilling fees. After a time it was found out that the School Board authorities at Runcorn were called upon to provide school accommodation for nearly two thousand boat children, which they could not do. At any rate, they did not wish to saddle the town with the expenses of educating boat children from all parts of the country, and from whom they received nothing in return; and the consequence is the two thousand boat children whose floating houses are registered at Runcorn are going without education to-day, and their parents cannot, so long as this registration exists, place them in any other School Board district in this country. The annual registration which I propose will give the boating and gipsy parents the opportunity of changing their homes or head-quarters without detriment to the children, and the establishment of more registration districts would, I am thoroughly convinced, place the matter on a satisfactory and workable basis. If John Jones during the year ceased working his boat in and out of Runcorn, and took to Paddington's scented waters, he could, by registering his boat at Paddington at the time of the renewal of his certificate, put his children under the London

School Board, which he cannot do under the present system. To meet the case of the gipsy and van children, any sanitary authority should be a registration authority, or at any rate at those towns where hawker's licences can be obtained.

Question 17. "How would your plan work out in the case of those families who live part of the year in vans, and the other part of the year in houses?"

I would propose that their vans should be registered at those registration districts in which the owner of the van has his settled home. I will illustrate this in the following manner. Suppose an owner of a van, after travelling the country during the summer months, draws his van into a yard and takes to house dwelling during the winter. Of course, the children during the winter months will be under the School Board authorities, at the place where his house is rated for the relief of the poor and other rates; but supposing—as is often the case—with the dawn of spring the gipsy traveller desires to leave his house during the summer months, and takes his wife and children round the country, I would suggest that he should provide himself with a free educational pass book, and that he should be compelled to send his children to some day school the required number of times, and it would be the duty of the School Board officers where his van is registered, together with the School Board officers where the vans may be temporarily located, to examine the pass book, and to see that the educational clauses were carried out. In case of village feasts the children should be sent to the next village school. Children can easily make the number of attendances.

Question 18. "What is your opinion about the education gained in this way?"

It will not be the best education in the world, but it will be a thousand times better than none at all. It would cause them to see some of the advantages of education, and it would start their young ideas up civilizing channels.

Question 19. "Would it not be a hardship upon the parents if the children were not allowed to work in connection with their vans and shows until they had passed the Third Standard?"

They would not be in a worse position than other working classes are. As a rule, they spend much more money in drink than labourers in our towns and villages do. All the working classes, except the two I refer to, are prohibited from sending their children to work before they have passed the Fourth Standard, and I am sure that the little gipsy, acrobat and other children attending stalls, shows, and cocoa-nut establishments endure more trying occupations, long hours, and severe toil than our factory children.

Question 20. "How would you deal with those gipsies, and others

who are living and huddling together in old vans and other places, whose travelling homes the Sanitary Inspectors would not pass as habitable?"

There would be three ways open to them: First, they must be compelled to hire a habitable van, which vans can be had on hire at Bristol and other places; or, secondly, they must go into settled homes; or, thirdly, we must apply the plan I propose for granting them long leases of common or waste land at a nominal rent.

Question 21. "Will you explain why it is that you would charge ten shillings per annum for vans, and only five shillings per annum for canal boats?"

Canal boats are engaged in furthering commerce, and thus add to the wealth of the country. In the case of gipsy vans, the owners use the roads of the country and pay neither rates nor taxes, and they do not, except those who use their vans to hawk goods round the country, add to the welfare of the nation, and for that reason I would suggest a little heavier registration fee. Gipsies and canal boatmen can move about the country for centuries and not be called upon to pay one farthing for any kind of rates, which is a pleasure they ought to enjoy without one moment's delay.

Question 22. "You say in your Canal Boats Act Amendment Bill, and you want the principle extended to vans, that no child or young person should be allowed to work for either hire or profit on Sundays. Would not this be rather hard upon poverty?"

The law prohibits children and young persons being employed in other occupations, and there is no earthly reason why the poor travelling children should toil seven days a week. I claim that if children employed all-week in light healthy work are exempted from Sunday labour, then most surely children tramping the country in vans should have the same right. In Section 21 Clause 3 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1878, 41 Vict. ch. 16, it is laid down that "a child, young person, or woman shall not be employed in a factory or workshop" with some exceptions; so you will see that I do not go so far as the Section I have quoted does, although the travelling children need the protection more.

Question 23. "How would you do in the case of boats conveying perishable goods?"

The boats should be worked by adults as fly boats are.

Question 24. "Do you not think that your plan would interfere too much with the liberty of Englishmen? Ought not a traveller to be allowed to live where he likes and how he likes?"

Yes: providing it were good for the nation and everybody did the same. My plan would not interfere with the liberty of the gipsies and other travellers nearly so much as the law already interferes with the

liberties of others of her Majesty's subjects. People living in ships, houses, palaces, cellars, barracks, cabs, coaches, and carriages have to conform to healthy rules and sanitary requirements. I knew a case of a travelling house conveying small-pox to a large town and causing more than 2,000 deaths. I have known over and over again of cases where infectious diseases have been carried through the country by means of canal boats and vans. Only the other day a man, wife, and five children came to our door with an old tumbledown pony and rickety waggon. The little box upon the top of the waggon, used as "sleeping apartments" for the whole of the family, would not be seventy cubic feet of space. Even in this little crib the five children were all ill of a highly infectious disease, which they were carrying through the country. The two main influences I want to bring to bear upon the little travellers and their homes are the universally acknowledged social laws for elevating those living in the gutter, viz., education and sanitation. With the thorough application of these to little gipsies I shall be satisfied, and then the children will have made the first step in a gradual improvement, leading them to Christianity and civilization, so that they shall be strong enough in brain and muscle to turn the world upside down and downside up. I want the road to school made easier than the road to jail, and I would prefer seeing the sanitary inspector and School Board officer walk into the gipsy vans than either the policeman or the doctor.

Question 25. "How do you propose carrying out the Act? Would you leave the matter entirely in the hands of the local authorities?"

I propose that the registration and local inspection should be done by the local authorities in the town or places through which the vans passed or stayed, as the case might be. I do not think that it would be wise to place the actual working out of the plans I propose in the hands of the Local Government Board. The Local Government Board should only be called upon to appoint one or two Inspectors to visit the fairs and other places occasionally to see that the local authorities properly carried out the Act. I recommend the same course in the "Canal Boats Act Amendment Bill."

Question 26. "How would you propose paying the Government Inspectors? Would their salaries be an increased charge upon the Treasury?"

No: the Inspectors would not cost the country one farthing, as the profits arising from the 5s. stamped registration certificates would more than pay the Government for their expenses of supervision; and the other 5s., together with the fines, would satisfy the local authorities.

Question 27. "What number of travelling families are there in the

country who would be called upon to take out annual registration certificates?"

I should think at a rough calculation there will be between six and eight thousand, which would yield a sum of £1,500 to £2,000 annually.

Question 28. "You refer in your Congress papers to the granting of a portion of land to certain classes of the gipsies who are desirous of settling down, on long leases at a nominal rent. Do you think the gipsies would agree to this plan?"

I do most assuredly—*i.e.*, if any reliance is to be placed upon their own statements, and I think they are worthy of credence. In the first place, the land should be granted to those gipsies who have been on the road during the last twelve months only. Secondly, I would grant to each family of man, wife, and two children, four acres; this would, after the first year, enable a man to keep a cow and grow vegetables enough for the family. Supposing there were three thousand families, they would require 12,000 acres of waste land. To meet the expenses, and to provide ways and means, a society should be founded principally upon philanthropic and business principles combined, and this—or, better still, the Government—should grant small sums of money to the tenants by way of loan at a small interest, to enable them to erect a hut, and to provide food for the first year. Of course the money should be advanced gradually as the work and other things progressed. I should think that £100 for each family would be amply sufficient to tide them over the first year, to be spent as follows: £30 for the hut; £40 for one year's keep; £17 for a little Welsh cow; £3 for pig and fowls; and £10 for tools and implements. The Society advancing the money should have a lien upon the land until all the money advanced had been paid back. Proper safeguards would have to be taken on all sides.

Question 29. "What would be the ultimate effect of this plan of allotting land to the gipsies and other travellers?"

The gain would be infinite. The men, women, and children would be drawn from a life of vagabondage, theft, and idleness to one of work and profit to themselves and the country's good. Of course all would require time to work out. If the three thousand families were eating bread of their own earning, and cultivating twelve thousand acres of land which is at present bringing forth nothing but moor game and partridges, the results would be heavenly and eternal pleasure to themselves and the country. Any of my plans would be a thousand times better than destroying parental responsibility by taking their children from them by force and sending them to industrial schools, "and turning their parents loose" upon society to inculcate their idle, lying, cheating habits and customs into others

they may be brought in contact with, who stand ready with open mouths to receive gipsy lies, damning tricks, cheating, and lore as gospel.

Question 30. "On behalf of the various Christian churches throughout the country, would you kindly tell us what steps you would take for improving the spiritual condition of the gipsies, canal boatmen, and other travellers? Would you organize a missionary society with a staff of officials, secretaries, travellers, agents, &c., with headquarters in London?"

No. If such an organization was started it is my decided conviction that but little good would be the result. Missionaries, like other folks, desire to see the fruits of their labours, which, owing to the fluctuating habits of the boaters, gipsies, and others, they are unable to see. The only way in which missionary organization could work successfully would be to have a few vans and temporary booths, such as some of the show people use as "boxing establishments," and to place them in charge of a good man and his wife, who would live in the van and visit some of the principal fairs in the country. Religious services and a Sunday-school could be conducted in the booths on Sundays, and a day-school for those children whom the law would allow to travel with their parents on week days, or at any rate on the morning of fair days. The man and his wife could conduct a religious service at nights, and also distribute during the day, when not engaged in the school, religious periodicals and other literature of the kind. By far the better plan will be for the various religious denominations in each town to set to work in right good earnest to remedy the evil as it comes periodically into their midst. Local missionary societies might be formed, composed of all sections of Christ's Church, to erect a temporary wooden booth to stand side by sid of the devil's booths during fair time. Here religious services could be conducted by various societies in their turn. The members of the Church of England to have the use of the booth, say on Saturday; the Wesleyans, Monday; the Congregationalists on Tuesday; the Baptists on Wednesday; the Primitive Methodists on Thursday, and so on through the week, the various sections following each other in their proper order. Sometimes it would happen that the Wesleyans would have the booth on the Saturday night, and the Church of England on the Sunday. I am not a believer in a work of this kind being left to a few. It should be the duty of all Christians and philanthropists to help forward the cause of the children. Those who give money would give time too, if asked and set to work. As a rule the givers are the workers, if they know when to begin and how to begin. Another plan would be to follow the usual course carried out in missioning back streets, &c., viz., to sing, distribute tracts

among the travellers, gipsies, and others, speaking at the same time faithful words of counsel, reproof, warning, caution. Whatever course is followed, the persons engaged in trying to improve the condition of the gipsies and others must not go about it in a kind of stand-off manner. When they want to shake hands with either canal boatmen or gipsies, their fingers must not be put out as if they were tied upon the end of a cold poker, and they were afraid of the rough grip of a gipsy crushing it to powder. A warm heart and a pleasant word are passports that will admit any man or woman into boat cabins, gipsy tents, and travellers' rooms. A prying inquisitiveness these people abhor and detest, and they will resent it to the utmost. Any little matters relating to their lives, habits, &c., they will tell to friends whose object is their good without "pumping." Whoever ministers to the boatmen, gipsies, or travellers must be prepared to eat at their tables, and drink out of their cups, even if it be on the ground among mud, out of a dirty basin, and served with dirtier hands. They do not think they are dirty, and those who visit them must, if they mean to do any good among them, shut their eyes and hold their tongues to things they do not like. Little acts of kindness are not forgotten by them, and a word of faithful reproof they will appreciate—*i.e.*, if it comes from a man or woman who means their present and eternal welfare. I have said most hard and faithful things to them, as most people know, for which I have not at their hands been subjected to insult or abuse. In a few cases where I have been misunderstood, I have come in for my share, but afterwards they have been sorry for it. The electrical sparks of sympathy in their nature will not manifest themselves at the touch of selfish hands. It is only the love and sympathy in the hearts of those who visit them that brings out the finer feelings of the boaters and gipsies to perform deeds of love. I now say again, what I have often said before, that the best missionary agency for effecting their spiritual good will be the proper carrying out of an Act on the lines I have laid down. When once the children are taught to read, the next step should be to see that books of the right kind are placed in their hands, and, with the blessing of Heaven, the first step towards a moral reformation in the habits, lives, and customs of our gipsies, canal boatmen, and other travelling tribes and classes, will have been taken for their eternal welfare.

Question 31. "Can you give us any proof of gipsies having taken to civilized customs and usages, having risen in the social scale equal to other law-abiding subjects?"

I will only give you a few names. One of the best and sweetest singers who ever sang before the Russian nobility was a gipsy damsel. One of the best actresses that ever put her foot upon an English stage

was a gipsy. A celebrated Scotch clergyman of this late day is of gipsy parentage; and so is also one of the present-day Wesleyan ministers. Some sculpture and carving in the large hall of the House of Commons is from gipsy hands; at any rate there was more than two-thirds of gipsy blood in the artist's veins—I have been told that he was a thorough gipsy. The wife of one of our celebrated London architects is, or nearly so, of gipsy parentage; and the beautiful little songsters she can paint are most charming. You could almost imagine when you see her handiwork that you could hear the pretty little creatures warbling and piping forth God's praises. They adorn many drawing-rooms. Recently I have heard of two gipsies in Surrey who own two rows of houses as a result of their civilized habits. Others could be named who have saved money, and are a credit to themselves and the country. John Bunyan was a gipsy, as every one knows who has read his work and studied his temperament, habits, character, early life, and surroundings. If there had never been a gipsy in the world but John Bunyan who had risen out of a wigwam, he would afford sufficient proof that gipsies, if taken by the hand, can step towards heaven, and draw others up after them. I knew a number of gipsies who have lived decent lives and have died happy in God. There are to be seen to-day gipsies wending their way to God's house on Sundays, preparing themselves for the changes which await us all.

Question 32. "Before we part we should like to ask you what effect legislation would have upon the travellers and gipsies? Would the numbers increase or decrease?"

With the proper carrying out of the education clauses and sanitary plans I propose, wisely and firmly, the number of gipsies would very soon decrease, and the sanitary inspectors and School Board officers would be the instruments for bringing this desirable result about. Persecution, policeman, and the jail will cause gipsyism to grow, while education and sanitation will divert it into healthy channels.

GEORGE SMITH, *of Coalville.*

WELTON, DAVENTRY,
December 31, 1882.

APPENDIX B.

LETTER TO THE RIGHT HON. EARL ABERDARE.

THE following remarks are the substance of a letter I sent to the Right Hon. Earl Aberdare—who has been a friend to the cause I have in hand, and more than kind to myself—on May 24, 1882, in reply to some questions his lordship put to me with reference to some of the details of my plans for properly carrying out the Canal Boats Act of 1877; and as they will apply with equal force to the carrying out of my gipsy plans when my Canal Amending Bill is passed, I deem it right that they should find a place here.

"At the present time there will be, at a rough calculation, nearly 10,000 boats registered. In 1879 there were over 5,000 boats registered, and the number, owing principally to my continued agitation, has kept increasing. Supposing that there are only 10,000 boats registered—with the prospect of another 5,000—this would, if the registration certificates were stamped with a half-crown stamp, as I suggest to be paid by the boatowner, produce an annual amount of £1,250, which would be quite sufficient to cover the expenses of Government supervision, inquiries, and annual reports.

"More than half of the hundred registration authorities throughout the country do not pay any increased salaries to the local registration officers for registering the boats, and the little inspection that has been done by them.

"In some instances £10 per annum has been added to the salaries of the officers. In some cases more than £10, and in other cases less than £10 has been added. In one instance the amount of £1 per boat has been given to the medical officer of health for registering the boats.

"The officers, in my humble opinion, best qualified to see to the inspection and registration of the boats under the Amending Bill are the sanitary officers.

"I do not propose, nor do I think that it would be wise under present circumstances, to establish an army of Government inspectors, with all their attendant charges upon the Treasury. One or two Government officials supervising the carrying out of the act and making occasional and unexpected visits to various canal centres or otherwise,

and also advising and working with the local registration officers in the carrying out of the Act and the regulations of the Local Government Board, is what I would recommend, at any rate in the first instance. Of course time and practice, as with other Acts, would develop the weak and faulty places—if there be any—of the measure.

"To meet the expenses of the registration and increased salaries of local inspectors, I propose that the master or captain of each boat shall pay to the local registration authorities an annual sum of two shillings and sixpence at the time when the annual certificate of registration is taken out; this would bring the total amount of the registration to the same as that now charged, viz., five shillings, for the first year, and the only registration that has taken place. No plan will be a success unless the certificate of registration be renewed annually. When the Act of 1877 came into operation it was expected by the boatowners and boatmen that there was to be an annual payment and registration fee, and I did not hear of any objection to it worth naming.

"After the first registration, and with the assistance of the Government inspectors or supervisors, the carrying out of the Act of 1877 and this Act will not be so troublesome and expensive a matter as is supposed.

"I do not think that, after a year or two, when the Act has got into working order, there will be any difficulty in the registration authorities being able to obtain an annual registration fee of five shillings, apart from the stamped certificates, which would make a total of seven shillings and sixpence for each boat." [With the payment of this amount, supposing that the canal children are receiving a free education, as I suggest they should, the boatmen with children of school age will be more than £1 per annum gainers.] "Even this amount is but a trifle when it is considered that boatmen and boatowners use the resources of the country, and neither pay rates nor taxes for their boats floating upon our rivers and canals. Or if it was advisable to raise the local registration fee from that which I now propose, viz., half a crown, to five shillings, it could be done without increasing the registration fee to be paid by the boatmen to the registration authority by dropping the half-crown stamped certificate and the Government paying for the expenses of Government supervision and inspection out of the Imperial Treasury, which, I am told, they are unwilling to do.

"To illustrate my meaning more clearly with reference to the registration fees I am now recommending, I will take the case of Leeds as a sample. Up to 1879 the local inspector at Leeds had registered two hundred canal boats at five shillings each, producing the sum of £50 to meet the expenses of the local inspection and

registration, and not one farthing in either fines or fees has been received by the registration authority at Leeds from the boat-owners or boatmen since for the inspection and registration. Whatever little time has been devoted by the local authorities to the carrying out of the Act, it has been done at the cost of the ratepayers at Leeds. According to the plan I propose there will be, under the Amending Bill, a yearly income from two hundred registered boats of £25 to the Leeds registration authorities, and £25 per annum to the Government for the two hundred stamped certificates.

"I may add that the annual registration fee is fixed by the Local Government Board in their regulations, and can, without a fresh Act of Parliament, be altered at any time.

"Another source of income to the local authorities, provided for under the Bill, and which would help to make the Act of 1877 and this Act thoroughly successful, will be that derived from the fines, which, under the Act of 1877, have hitherto been handed over to the county funds instead of to those who have been at the expense and trouble of enforcing the Act. The fines and fees will, I think, cover the whole of the expenses without taking any money from the local rates, or drawing upon the Imperial Treasury to any extent worth naming.

"In course of time, as the Act worked out, it might be desirable that the captain or master of the boat should have a certificate of qualification or registration, to be renewed annually. The better class of boatmen would be pleased with this arrangement, and it would have a beneficial effect upon the boatmen generally, as in the case of captains of vessels, &c.

"Objection might be taken to the yearly registration of canal boats. Some might say that registration every three years would be quite sufficient. The yearly registration, if carried out upon a plan set forth in my 'Canal Adventures by Moonlight,' page 219, would be a very much simpler affair than even in every three years.

"Canal boats often change hands both as regards ownership and mastership. To register the boats every three years it would be necessary, in order to keep a clue of the boats, to have clerks and a set of books wherein to enter the frequent changes. This plan in many cases would be a troublesome matter.

"Boats registered every year would be easily kept in view. The annual registration would bring both the boatowner and captain to the front.

"Owing to the children living in the boats being under the school authorities at which place the boats are registered as belonging to, it might be desirable, for many reasons, that the place of registration should be changed. I will take a case to explain my meaning

Suppose a boat is registered at Liverpool for three years; the children living in the boat, according to the Act of 1877, belong to Liverpool the length of time for which the boat is registered. But suppose in the course of a few months after the boat has been registered for three years the captain or master comes to work his boat near London. Naturally the captain would like to have his home and family near London and his children going to school near him. If the boat was registered at Liverpool for three years he could not remove his family till the time of registration was expired.

"The yearly registration would simplify the whole thing, and to a great extent overcomes cases of the above kind. With a change of the registration authority, a change of the school authority to which the boat children belong takes place as an outcome of the registration of the boats.

"GEORGE SMITH, *of Coalville.*

"*December* 31, 1882."

UNWIN BROTHERS, THE GRESHAM PRESS, CHILWORTH AND LONDON.



Mr. T. FISHER UNWIN'S

CATALOGUE

OF

NEW & RECENT BOOKS



Book Buyers are requested to order any Books they may require in this List from their local Bookseller.

Should any difficulty arise, the Publisher will be happy to forward any Book, CARRIAGE FREE, *on receipt of the Publication price.*

After perusal of this Catalogue, kindly pass it on to some Book-buying friend.

17, HOLBORN VIADUCT,
LONDON, E.C.,
May, 1883.

CATALOGUE
OF
Mr. T. FISHER UNWIN'S NEW BOOKS.

THE EPIC OF KINGS. Stories retold from the Persian Poet Firdusi. By HELEN ZIMMERN, Author of "Stories in Precious Stones," "Life of Lessing," &c. With Etchings by L. ALMA TADEMA, R.A., and Prefatory Poem by E. W. GOSSE. Popular Edition, Crown 8vo. cloth extra o 7 6

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"Charming from beginning to end. . . . Miss Zimmern deserves all credit for her courage in attempting the task, and for her marvellous success in carrying it out. . . . Miss Zimmern has indeed mastered a pure simple English which fits the antiquity of her subject, and the stories are told in a manner which must provoke the envy and admiration of all who have attempted this singularly difficult style of composition. There is nothing harder than to tell the ancient legends of a people without introducing a modern tone. Mr. Church has succeeded in re-writing the tales of Hellas in a way hitherto deemed almost unapproachable; but we may now place Miss Zimmern's paraphrase of the Persian legends on at least a level with those of the

THE EPIC OF KINGS—*continued.*

interpreter of Hellenic myths. . . . The book will be a notable addition to the libraries of those who care to know the great classics of the world."—*Saturday Review.*

"The carefulness and intelligence she displays in her selections from the 'Shāh Nāmeh,' no less than in her graceful renderings of them, are deserving of high praise. . . . Miss Zimmern's translations in this volume can be read with great pleasure. . . . A striking feature of the volume is Mr. Gosse's narrative poem, 'Firdusi in Exile,' in which is told, in charming verse, the picturesque story of the poet's exile and death."—*Athenæum.*

"Miss Zimmern has succeeded to admiration. . . . The result appears in a language at once dignified and simple, free from affectation, and at the same time sufficiently antiquated to carry one into the atmosphere of the stories themselves. . . . The choice of legends is a wise one. Miss Zimmern is really the first to introduce English readers to Persian legends in a worthy and attractive manner, and if her fine stories and admirable way of telling were presented in a reasonable form and at a reasonable cost,* *The Epic of Kings* would enjoy a wide popularity. . . . Mr. Gosse's poem will be enjoyed beyond anticipation; no sustained effort of his comes up to this last, 'Firdusi in Exile.' Dignified as its Oriental surroundings, yet simple and natural in treatment, it is among the finest narrative poems that have appeared for some time."—*S. Lane-Poole, in The Academy.*

"Her fine appreciation of the spirit of the poet which has enabled her to invest her creation with a garment at once so well suited to it, and so adapted to please modern readers, can hardly fail, we think, to gain her praise, even from those who would be most apt to demand nice scholarship. . . . Considering all these things, we cannot but believe that Miss Zimmern's work will meet with such acceptance as will justify her own expectations when, in her preface, she expressed the hope that it had been reserved for her to make more widely known some of the immortal beauties contained in Firdusi's poem."—*British Quarterly Review.*

"Miss Zimmern has been well advised in attempting to paraphrase this work, so far as concerns the most important and most poetical portion of it. In one volume she presents her readers with the essence and the gist of Firdusi's Epic, carrying the story down as far as the death of Rustem—that is, as far as the end of the purely poetical portion of the poet's work. She has selected well, and written the stories in a vivid style. Firdusi's stories may have a chance of becoming really popular in England."—*The Times.*

"Seems likely to effect something towards removing the reproach of almost total ignorance in this country of the writings of one of the most famous of Oriental poets."—*Daily News.*

"Miss Zimmern has accomplished a great and laborious work, for which all persons capable of taking pleasure in the tenderest

* This suggestion has since been carried out in the popular edition.

THE EPIC OF KINGS—*continued.*

love, or in adventures which stir the soul like martial music, will give her most hearty thanks. Not only with fine literary tact, but with just poetic intuition, Miss Zimmern has retold these poems of Firdusi. . . . In the 'Shāh Nāmeh,' modern poets will discover a very mine of poetic material, while the schoolboy can delight in its thrilling wonders and thrilling adventures as he does in 'Robinson Crusoe,' or in 'Gulliver's Travels.' The version before us is in all respects an important addition to English literature."—*Morning Post, Dec.* 28, 1882.

"Of Miss Zimmern's fitness for writing stories of this kind there need be no question. She has in other fields of literature shown how well she could adapt the productions of foreign writers to British tastes. In this case she had to compress enormously long stories into moderate compass. She had to keep in mind that the imagery of Persian poetry was not always likely to be either acceptable to or understood by the British reader, and she had to invest the stories with something of a modern interest. Not that she proposed to change the incidents, or to modernise the characters who moved in the stories; but she had to remember the tastes of to-day, and to give to her re-told stories the acceptable flavour. She has done this admirably. The stories are interesting. They will compare in many instances with the "Arabian Nights," and will compete with some of the stories in that wonderful book, alike in the dramatic character of their incidents and the poetic manner of their expression. The reader is transported into a Persian atmosphere, among the scenes which Firdusi loved so well, and could describe so marvellously."—*Scotsman.*

"So little of importance in the way of making Firdusi understood in this country has hitherto been effected, that Miss Zimmern's account of the 'gestes'—as the old chroniclers would call them—of Feridoun and Zal, of Kai Khosrau, of Rustem and Isfendiyar, and all those ancient heroes who, seen through the 'moony vapours' of tradition, seem to us like the phantoms of giants, have a freshness and interest which should make her volume no mere success of a season, but a permanent addition to English literature."—*Notes & Queries.*

Also an Édition de luxe, on Dutch Hand-made Paper, Super Roy. Quarto, limited to 200 copies Artist's Proofs on Japanese Paper, signed and numbered, bound in Parchment extra 3 3 0

Later Impressions, limited to 300 copies, on English Super Roy. 4to., the Etchings on India Paper, unsigned, bound in Cloth extra 2 2 0

*** A limited number of these editions may still be had.

GEORGE HERBERT'S POEMS.

THE TEMPLE: Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations. By Mr. GEORGE HERBERT. Small Crown. *New Edition*, with Introductory Essay by J. HENRY SHORTHOUSE, Author of "JOHN INGLESANT."

This is a fac-simile reprint by typography of the Original Edition of 1633. *No pains have been spared to make this an exact replica as regards paper, size, print, and binding.*

4th Edition, Sheep, imitation of Original Binding	0	5	0
Paper boards, Old Style, uncut edges	0	5	0
Imitation Morocco	0	6	0

"The style of Mr. Shorthouse's dainty little preface is, we should say, nearly perfect in its kind. . . From the delicate bit of word-painting with which it opens to the closing paragraph there is one clear thought running through the whole."—*Spectator.*

"This charming reprint has a fresh value added to it by the Introductory Essay of the Author of 'John Inglesant.'"—*Academy.*

THE PRINCE OF THE HUNDRED SOUPS: A Puppet Show in Narrative. Edited, with a Preface by VERNON LEE, Author of "Belcaro," "Studies of the Eighteenth Century in Italy," &c. With Four Illustrations in Sepia, by SARAH BIRCH. Square 8vo., cloth 0 5 0

"There is more humor in the volume than in half-a-dozen ordinary pantomimes."—*Spectator.*

"The preface is really more interesting than the 'Prince of the Hundred Soups,' and that—as we hope our readers will find out for themselves—is saying a good deal."—*Academy.*

"For myself, I can say that it had upon me the appetising effect of that dish in Horace which 'replaced the sated guest upon his elbow;' for though, when I took it up, I was utterly weary and dazed with the number of books I had gone through, yet I devoured it from cover to cover with a new zest."—*Truth.*

SUNSHINE AND SHADOWS: Sketches of Thought, Philosophic and Religious. By WILLIAM BENTON CLULOW, author of "Essays of a Recluse." New and enlarged edition, with Portrait and Appendix. Crown 8vo., cloth extra... o 5 o

"Should be a great favourite with the small class of readers who love condensed and concentrated expression, and who value a book in so far as it sets them thinking for themselves. Such readers will regard 'Sunshine and Shadows' as great spoil, as a companion in rambles, a book to be pencilled in the margin, to be taken down at odd moments as a refreshment. Readers who love Landor and Hare and Pascal will welcome Mr. Clulow's work and prize it highly."—*Bradford Observer.* [*Ready.*

NEW WORK BY GEORGE SMITH, OF COALVILLE.

I'VE BEEN A-GIPSYING: or Rambles among our Gipsies and their Children in their Tents and Vans. By GEORGE SMITH, of Coalville, Author of "The Cry of the Children from the Brickyards of England," "Our Canal Population," "Gipsy Life," "Canal Adventures by Moonlight," &c. *With an Appendix showing the Author's plans for the Compulsory Registration of Gipsy Vans, and the Education of Gipsy Children.* Illustrated. Crown 8vo., cloth extra ... ... o 6 o

[*Now ready.*

THE ROMAN STUDENTS; or, On the Wings of the Morning. A Tale of the Renaissance. By the Author of "The Spanish Brothers," &c. With Illustrations by G. P. JACOMB HOOD. Post 8vo., cloth extra ... ... o 6 o

"A thoroughly good historical tale. From its opening scenes in sunny Venice to its close in a German village, the interest is absorbing, while the reader feels invigorated by the healthy type of Christianity displayed, as well as enriched by much knowledge concerning the ways of men who have long since passed away."—*Christian*, December 14, 1882.

"One of the best stories of the year."—*British Quarterly Review.*

"THE CUPS THAT CHEER" SERIES.

1. **A CUP OF COFFEE.** Illustrated. Fcap. 8vo., boards ... ... o 1 o

*** Other volumes in preparation.

[*Now ready.*

TALES OF MODERN OXFORD. By the Author of "Lays of Modern Oxford." Crown 8vo., cloth extra ... ... o 6 o

COLLEGE DAYS; Recorded in Blank Verse. Printed on Dutch hand-made paper. Fcap. 8vo., parchment ... ... o 5 o

[*Now ready.*

HEROIC ADVENTURE: Chapters in Recent Exploration and Discovery. Illustrated. Second Edition. Crown 8vo., cloth extra ... ... o 4 6

*** *Containing in a popular form an account of the travels and adventures of great explorers of modern times, including Schweinfurth, Prejevalsky, Commander Markham, Vambery, Serpa Pinto, and Nordenskiöld.*

"Gives freshness to the old inexhaustible story of enterprise and discovery by selecting some of the very latest of heroes in this field."—*Daily News.*

"No fiction could surpass the excitement of some of these narratives of real enterprise. Boys of all ages will find an absorbing interest in these pages."—*Literary World.*

DICK'S HOLIDAYS, and What He Did with Them. A Picture Story Book of Country Life. By JAMES WESTON. Profusely Illustrated. Imperial 4to., cloth extra ... ... o 5 o

"This is precisely the book that sensible parents must often have been wanting. . . . This delightful book."—*Academy.*

"A delightful collection."—*Graphic.*

"Mr. Weston has been successful in introducing a new type of picture-book of the liveliest and most instructive kind."—*Manchester Guardian.*

"A new departure . . . . all the more acceptable on account of its originality."—*Edinburgh Daily Review.*

POEMS AND HYMNS. By the Rev. G. T. COSTER, of Whitby. Fcap. 8vo., cloth extra, gilt edges ... ... o 5 o

"The descriptive poems are very fine, especially 'The Village,' 'Early Days,' and 'The Children.' These suggest Crabbe in truthfulness of portrayal and purity of expression. The hymns are also possessed of more than average merit."—*Leeds Mercury.*

GENESIS THE THIRD: History not Fable. Being the 'Merchant's Lectures' for March, 1883. By EDWARD WHITE, B.A., Minister of St. Paul's Chapel, Kentish Town. Crown 8vo., cloth extra.. o 1 o

[*Ready.*

OTTILIE: an Eighteenth Century Idyl. By VERNON LEE, Author of "Belcaro," "Prince of the Hundred Soups," &c. Square 8vo., cloth extra ... o 3 6

[*Now ready.*

THE ILLUSTRATED POETRY BOOK FOR YOUNG READERS. Small Crown 8vo., cloth extra. Second edition ... ... o 2 6

"It is in every way far removed from the common-place. It will be found to present many pretty poems, which are but little known."—*Publisher's Circular.*

"The best book of the kind which has passed through our hands for some time."—*Bookseller.*

"May be heartily commended as a gift book suitable for all children who are fond of poetry (and what children are not?)"—*Congregationalist.*

AMERICAN DISHES, and How to Cook Them. From the Recipe-book of an American Lady. Crown 8vo., cloth extra ... ... o 2 6

*** A Cook-book that really meets the wants of the modern gastronomer.

[*Ready.*

THOMAS CARLYLE, The Man and His Books. Illustrated by Personal Reminiscences, Table Talk, and Anecdotes of Himself and his Friends. By WM. HOWIE WYLIE. Third edition, revised and corrected. Crown 8vo., cloth extra o 7 6

Reviewing the latest volumes on Carlyle, the *Spectator* of November 12, 1881, says:—"The best specimen is that by Mr. Howie Wylie, previously reviewed in these columns, a work which we know to have been read with pleasure by at least one warm and intimate friend of Carlyle, and to which, after perusing others of its kin, we return with a somewhat heightened estimate, from the point of view of the critic."

"One of the most masterly biographies—a bit of work, indeed, which it would be hard to surpass for sympathy, delicacy, liberality of view, and wealth of friendly insight."—*Contemporary Review.*

GERMAN LIFE AND LITERATURE.

In a Series of Biographical Studies. By A. H. JAPP, LL.D. Demy 8vo., cloth ... ... o 12 o

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"This volume, as a whole, is admirable, each chapter being characterised by thoroughness, impartiality, fine critical discernment, an always manly literary ability, and, above all, a moral healthiness of tone. In fact, we are not acquainted with any English work, or, for that matter, with any Continental or American work, which we could place with so much confidence in the hands of a young student of modern German literature as the volume under review, and as special proof of our assertion we would select the essay on Goethe. . . . For this work we must express sincere gratitude to the author."—*Spectator.*

"There is a good deal of purely biographical interest in some of these articles. The essay on Lessing is full and shows reading. . . . The article on Moses Mendelssohn is the best that Dr. Japp has done. It is well filled with facts; it tells an interesting story fairly well; and Mendelssohn's place in the history of Jewish thought has been appreciated".—*Saturday Review.*

"By far the best account of Moses Mendelssohn accessible to English readers. . . . No better introduction to the study of modern German literature could be desired."—*Mr. John Snodgrass in his recently published translation of Heine's "Religion and Philosophy in Germany."*

MEDITATIONS & DISQUISITIONS

ON THE FIRST PSALM; On the Penitential and the Consolatory Psalms. By Sir RICHARD BAKER, Knight, Author of "The Chronicle of England," &c. &c. A verbatim reprint in modern spelling. With Introduction by Rev. A. B. GROSART, LL.D., F.S.A. Portrait and Autograph. Crown 8vo., cloth ... ... o 6 6

"We have long known the comments of Sir Richard Baker, and we have often wondered how they escaped reprinting. . . . He turns his text over and over, and sets it in new lights, and makes it sparkle and flash in the sunlight after a manner little known among the blind critics of the midnight school. Deep experience, remarkable shrewdness, and great spirituality are combined in Sir Richard. It is hard to quote from him, for he is always good alike, and yet he has more memorable sentences than almost any other writer."—*The Sword and Trowel.*

GUDRUN AND OTHER STORIES. From the Epics of the Middle Ages. By Professor GIBB. With 20 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, gilt edges ... ... o 6 o

"This volume will be certain to charm youthful readers; and a safer or more acceptable gift-book it would be difficult to find. . . . Without some such work these precious prototypes of Anglo-Germanic romance would have remained sealed volumes for all youthful readers; they therefore owe a debt of gratitude to him who has translated, condensed, and put them into a popular prose form for their perusal."—*Academy.*

MODERN MISSIONS: Their Trials and Triumphs. By ROBERT YOUNG, Assistant Secretary to the Missions of the Free Church of Scotland. With many Illustrations, and a Mission Map. Third and revised edition. Crown 8vo., cloth extra ... ... o 5 o

"Tells the great story of the trials and triumphs of *Modern Missions.* It was a happy idea to endeavour to include that story, as briefly told as might be, in one small volume, so that Christian people of every Church might read within its four hundred pages the tale of what has been done in every land and by all sorts of Christians for the evangelisation of mankind. This book should certainly be placed upon the shelves of parish, congregational, and Sunday-school libraries. It is brief and comprehensive."—*Christian World.*

FOOTPRINTS: Nature seen on its Human Side. By SARAH TYTLER, Author of "Papers for Thoughtful Girls," &c. With 125 Illustrations. 2nd and cheaper edition. Crown 8vo. ... ... o 4 6

"A book of real worth."—*Spectator.*

THE HOUSE BY THE WORKS. By EDWARD GARRETT, Author of "Occupations of a Retired Life," &c., &c. With Frontispiece. Cheap edition. Crown 8vo.... ... ... o 5 o

"The girls with their Quaker and Moravian training, the worthy and benevolent Mrs. Pendlebury, and society generally, rich and poor, in Perford, are depicted with skill."—*Daily News.*

"The picture he gives us here of the Enticknapp household, with its Moravian and Quaker traditions, is one nearly perfect of its kind for sobriety of taste and freedom from all sentimental exaggerations.'—*Graphic.*

THREE AND SIXPENNY BOOKS.

INDUSTRIAL CURIOSITIES: Glances Here and There in the World of Labour. Written and Edited by ALEXANDER HAY JAPP, LL.D., F.R.S.E. New and cheaper edition. Crown 8vo. cloth extra ... ... o 3 6

"Would make an excellent prize or present-book, especially for boys with a taste for miscellaneous information. Anyone, however, whose notion of a book is not limited to novels ought to be able to read it with pleasure, and can hardly do so without profit."—*Academy.*

"Dr. Japp travels through a variety of subjects, always entertaining and instructive."—*Spectator.*

"Nowadays boys are so fed upon story books and books of adventure that we welcome a book which tells them something about the facts of the world they live in."—*Graphic.*

THE HUMAN VOICE AND THE CONNECTED PARTS; A Popular Guide for Speakers and Singers. By Dr. J. FARRAR. With Thirty-nine Illustrations. Crown 8vo. cloth extra. o 3 6

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"No doubt there are many works of the same kind, but we are bound to say that we have never met with one where the descriptions of the whole vocal apparatus are treated in so popular a manner. The chapter devoted to the explanation of the voices and their compass contains some very good hints as to the management of the various parts concerned in vocalisation. We may add that the work contains thirty-nine illustrations, all of which are executed with the utmost accuracy, and that in every respect no pains have been spared to realise the author's desire that it should be made 'a really practical and serviceable book.' "—*Musical Times.*

"A very careful and minute exposition of vocal phenomena. Its utility is enhanced by a large number of diagrams."—*The Scotsman.*

"A work that is sure to be found of real practical value.'—*British Quarterly Review.*

THREE AND SIXPENNY BOOKS—*continued.*

LEADERS OF MEN: A Book of Biographies specially written for Young Men. By H. A. PAGE, author of "Golden Lives." Crown 8vo, cloth extra, gilt edges, with Portraits. Third edition ... o 3 6

JOHN DUNCAN. SAMUEL GREG.
DR. JOHN WILSON. ANDREW REED.
LORD LAWRENCE.



THE PRINCE CONSORT. ROBERT DICK.
COMMODORE GOODENOUGH. GEORGE MOORE

SPECIMEN OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"Mr. Page thoroughly brings out the disinterestedness and devotion to high aims which characterise the men of whom he writes He has done his work with care and good taste."—*Spectator.*

"No one knows better than Mr. Page how to put within moderate compass the outstanding features of a life that has blessed the world so as to present a striking and impressive picture. This is just the volume to enlarge the views and to ennoble the aims of young men, and to such we specially commend it."—*Literary World.*

"Here is a book which should be in the hands of every boy in the kingdom in whose mind it is desirable to implant a true ideal of life, and a just notion of the proper objects of ambition; and we may congratulate Mr. Page upon having carried out his task with all possible care and skill. 'Leaders of Men' is every way an admirable volume." —*Court Circular.*

THREE AND SIXPENNY BOOKS—*continued.*

WISE WORDS AND LOVING DEEDS:

A Book of Biographies for Girls. By E. CONDER GRAY. Crown 8vo., cloth extra, gilt edges, with Portraits. Fourth edition ... ... o 3 6

CONTENTS.

Mary Somerville.	Madame Feller.
Lady Duff Gordon.	Baroness Bunsen.
Sarah Martin.	Amelia Sieveking.
Ann Taylor.	Mary Carpenter.
Charlotte Elliott.	Catherine Tait.



SPECIMEN OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"A series of brightly-written sketches of lives of remarkable women. The subjects are well chosen and well treated."—*Saturday Review.*

"An interesting series of biographical sketches; though it is entitled a 'Book of Biographies for Girls,' it may be profitably and pleasantly used by other readers."—*Spectator.*

"The biographies of women whose lives were well worth relating, excellently told by one who has not only the power of expression, but also the gift of sympathy. Indeed, it may profit and interest any reader."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

THREE AND SIXPENNY BOOKS—*continued.*

MASTER MISSIONARIES: Studies in Heroic Pioneer Work. By ALEXANDER H. JAPP, LL.D., F.R.S.E. With Portraits and Illustrations. Crown 8vo., gilt edges. New and cheaper edition. o 3 6

JAMES OGLETHORPE. DAVID ZEISBERGER. G. W. WALKER. ROBERT MOFFAT. DR. JAS. STEWART. DR. W. BLACK. SAMUEL HEBICH. J. COLERIDGE PATTESON. WILLIAM ELMSLIE. J. G. FEE.



SPECIMEN OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

"An extremely interesting book. The reader need not be afraid of falling into beaten tracks here."—*The Guardian.*

"A collection of sketches from the practised pen of Dr. Japp, of men who have rendered good service to their race. All are graphic and very interesting."—*Nonconformist.*

"It brings before the reader a vivid conception of all the grandest chapters in pioneer effort throughout the world. There are many who must have felt the want of just such a handy book as this, and these will be grateful to Dr. Japp."—*Glasgow Mail.*

"A really excellent and readable book."—*Literary Churchman.*

THREE AND SIXPENNY BOOKS—*continued.*

PLANT LIFE: Popular Papers on the Phenomen of Botany. With 148 Illustrations drawn by the Author. Crown 8vo., cloth extra ... ... o 3 6



SPECIMEN OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"The author has produced a little volume well suited to attract the attention and stimulate the curiosity of the student. By clothing the dry details of morphological construction with information as to the life history of plants, and by calling attention to the varied adaptations of form to function, he has followed in the wake of that numerous band of naturalists who have at once done so much to extend the bounds of botanical science, and to make it attractive to the amateur."—*Athenæum.*

"More delightful reading for the country at this season of the year authors and publishers have not provided for us."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

"The author has done his work well."—*English Mechanic.*

"An unpretending book, whose contents cover a very great extent of botanical ground, particularly those parts which are new and interesting. . . . All abundantly and well illustrated, proving the author to be a man of thorough botanical culture, and possessing much grace of literary style."—*Science Gossip.*

THREE AND SIXPENNY BOOKS—*continued.*

LABOUR AND VICTORY. By A. H. JAPP, LL.D. Memoirs of Those who deserved Success and Won it. New edition, Crown 8vo., cloth extra, gilt edges... ... ... 0 3 6

BISHOP SELWYN. SIR TITUS SALT. SIR JAMES OUTRAM. THOMAS EDWARD. SIR JAMES SIMPSON. WILLIAM ELLIS. THOS. DAVIDSON. FRIEDRICH AUGUSTI.



SPECIMEN OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"There must assuredly be a large number of readers to whom these stories of the lives of such men will prove very acceptable."—*Spectator.*

"We should be glad to see this volume in the hands of thousands of boys and young men."—*Leeds Mercury.*

"Just the sort of reading which should be put into the hands of a boy, while grown men may also read it with profit."—*Court Circular.*

"Dr. Japp makes good use of the materials on which his sketches are founded, and always writes in an interesting and instructive style."—*Inquirer.*

THREE AND SIXPENNY BOOKS—*continued.*

THE TREASURE BOOK OF CONSOLATION: For all in Sorrow or Suffering. Compiled and Edited by BENJAMIN ORME, M.A., Editor of "The Treasure Book of Devotional Reading.' Crown 8vo., cloth extra, gilt top ... o 3 6

"Yet even the greatest griefs
May be reliefs,
Could we but take them right and in their ways;
Happy is he whose heart
Hath found the art
To turn his double pains to double praise."
GEORGE HERBERT.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"The book is a striking testimony to the fact that, whatever else Christianity may be, it is emphatically a power that consoles. Pain and sorrow, as mirrored in these extracts, are no accidents of human life, not evil to be endured with what firmness a man may, but something by which life is made wider, deeper, purer, and infinitely more glorious than it otherwise could have been. Pain is transfigured in the light of a larger life, when it is accepted by the sufferer as a step towards the grand optimism of Christianity, in which all things are regarded as working together for good. With great taste and judgment, and with wide catholicity of sentiment, Mr. Orme has made his selections. His book is, indeed, a book of consolation. We believe it will find a welcome in many a household, and help many who suffer to bear their pain hopefully."—*Spectator.*

TWO AND SIXPENNY BOOKS.

BEAUTIES AND FRIGHTS, WITH THE STORY OF BOBINETTE. By SARAH TYTLER, Author of "Papers for Thoughtful Girls," "Footprints," &c. Illustrated by M. E. EDWARDS. Second Edition. Small 8vo., cloth extra, gilt edges ... ... o 2 6

"Delightful sketches of girls' lives."—*Academy.*

"Miss Tytler is one of the few writers of modern times who know how to write girls' stories. It is impossible for her to be dull; her tales are always sprightly, easy, and clever, and while she does not condescend to preach, there are admirable life-lessons to be learned in all she writes."—*Literary World.*

"Clever bits of character sketching."—*Publishers' Circular.*



BEAUTIES AND FRIGHTS.

TWO AND SIXPENNY BOOKS—*continued.*

VERS DE SOCIÉTÉ & PARODY, with other Essays. By H. A. PAGE, Author of 'De Quincey," and "Thoreau." Crown 8vo., cloth extra o 2 6
[*Ready.*

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"We have been much interested in this amusing and instructive volume, the first half of which is devoted to "Vers de Société and Parody." . . . If published alone this essay itself would have deserved to have been placed alongside of the famous Rejected Addresses."—*Literary World.*

THE WAY TO FORTUNE: A Series of Short Essays, with Illustrative Proverbs and Anecdotes from many sources. Third edition. Small 8vo., cloth extra ... ... o 2 6

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"Profusely illustrated with proverbs and anecdotes, which being throughout apt to the injunctions, are likely to act as useful memories, when the text of "The Way to Fortune" is not at hand."—*The Inquirer.*

"The author is not only a man with a large outlook upon human affairs, but with a wide and varied knowledge of English literature. Any young man—or, for that matter, any young woman—who will lay the counsels of this book to heart, cannot fail to find the way to nobility, fruitfulness, and usefulness of life, if not to fortune. We could wish nothing better for this book than to see it in the hands of all who set any value on self-help."—*Literary World.*

"This is not a big book, but it contains no fewer than fifty essays. Each is necessarily brief, and yet there is not one that does not contain a large amount of wisdom, made more effective by the help of illustrative proverbs and anecdotes. We gratefully recognise the high-toned manliness and spirituality of the skilful maker of the book. It ought to become a standard, and will make a useful present to a young man—all the more that it is certain to be read, so full is it of interest, so amusing and vivacious, as well as instructive and solid."—*The Freeman.*

"Bright, pithy, and readable. The author must be a perfectly omnivorous reader. The tone is wholesome and vigorous, and not a little of the instruction given is specially suited to correct the errors of a too-luxurious age."—*Glasgow Mail.*

TWO AND SIXPENNY BOOKS—*continued.*

MARGARET THE MOONBEAM: A Tale for the Young. By CECILIA LUSHINGTON, Author of "Forty Years in Sandbourne." With Illustrations by M. E. EDWARDS. Small 8vo., cloth extra, gilt edges 0 2 6



SPECIMEN OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

EIGHTEENPENNY BOOKS.

THE STARRY BLOSSOM, & OTHER STORIES. By M. BETHAM-EDWARDS, Author of "Minna's Holiday," &c. Illustrations by Miss JOANNA SAMWORTH. Small 8vo., cloth extra... o 1 6



SPECIMEN OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

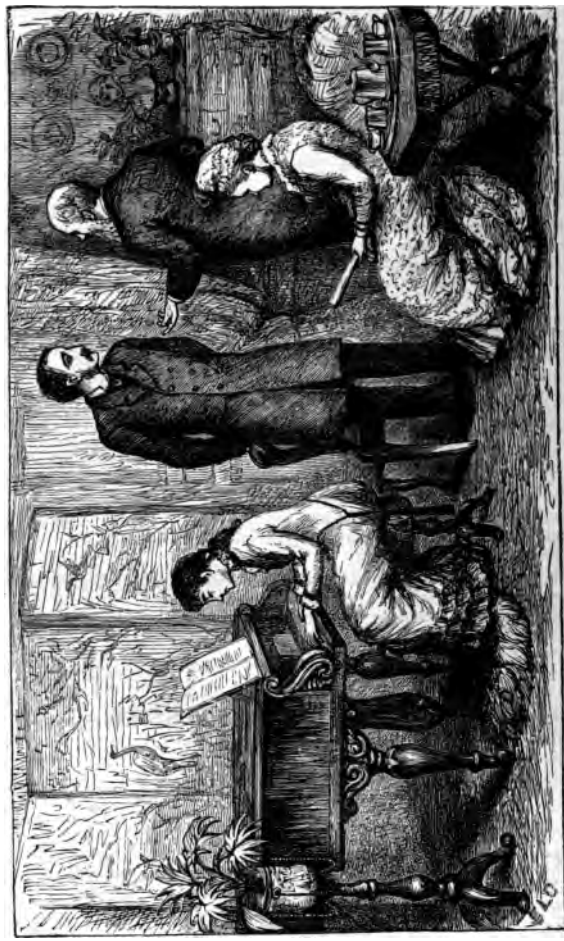
EIGHTEENPENNY BOOKS—*continued.*

DAN STAPLETON'S LAST RACE. By Mrs. MILNE RAE, Author of "Morag," "Hartleigh Towers," &c. Small 8vo., cloth extra, 1/6.



ONE SHILLING BOOKS.

WINMORE & CO. A Tale of the Great Bank Failure. Small 8vo., cloth extra 0 1 0



ONE SHILLING BOOKS—*continued.*

PRINCIPLES TO START WITH. By ISAAC WATTS, D.D. Introduction by THOMAS BINNEY, D.D. Seventh Thousand. 32mo, red edges, cloth elegant, or in the new wood binding: maple, cedar, walnut, and sycamore 0 1 0

"A gem in the way of printing and binding, while the excellence of the short practical precepts offered by the writers can hardly be over-estimated."—*Rock.*

"Cannot be pondered and practised without an elevating effect."—*Outlook.*

"Just the sort of book for a young man setting out in life. It can easily be carried in the waistcoat pocket, and we can conceive of no better *vade mecum*. It is seldom that we meet with so much good sense packed into so small a space."—*Congregationalist.*

THE CHILDREN'S BOUQUET OF Verse and Hymn. Gathered by AUNT SARAH and COUSIN GRACE. 32mo, red edges, cloth elegant, or wood: maple, cedar, walnut, or sycamore ... 0 1 0

"Love for the little ones has clearly been at work in the making of this selection; good taste as well, and a most catholic sympathy."—*Christian Leader.*

"Its little verses and hymns are selected with fine taste and appreciation of children's likings. Externally, the book is a little gem."—*Baptist.*

"One of the daintiest of dainty little books for little people. The selection of verses is admirable, containing, with some old favourites, many that will be fresh to most children."—*Christian.*

THE HISTORY OF RASSELAS, Prince of Abyssinia. By SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D. A new edition, small crown 8vo. 0 1 0

[*Now ready.*

A RIVER HOLIDAY. The Lay of a Boating Trip. With 17 Illustrations by HARRY FURNISS. Demy 8vo. 0 1 0

[*Now ready.*

HALF-HOLIDAY HANDBOOKS:

Guides to Rambles round London. With Maps, Illustrations, and Bicycle Routes. Crown 8vo., s. d.
sewed 0 9
Cloth 1 0

I. KINGSTON - ON - THAMES AND DISTRICT.
II. ROUND REIGATE.
III. DORKING AND DISTRICT.
IV. ROUND RICHMOND.
V. GEOLOGICAL RAMBLES ROUND LONDON: A Guide to Old-World London.
VI. ROUND TUNBRIDGE WELLS.
VII. GREENWICH, BLACKHEATH, AND DISTRICT.
VIII. FROM CROYDON TO THE NORTH DOWNS.
IX. ROUND BROMLEY, KESTON, AND DISTRICT.
X. ROUND SYDENHAM & NORWOOD.
XI. WIMBLEDON, PUTNEY, AND DISTRICT, including BARNES, ROEHAMPTON, MERTON, &c.
EPPING FOREST AND DISTRICT.
HAMPSTEAD, HIGHGATE, FINCHLEY, AND DISTRICT.
GUILDFORD, GODALMING, AND DISTRICT.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"We could not do better than consult one of these cheap Handbooks."—*Times.*

"Those 'Half-Holiday Handbooks' are very useful. But why not 'Whole Holiday Pocket Books,' showing where to go, when to go, and how to go it? If Mr. Fisher Unwin doesn't look sharp, we shall have this series out ourselves about Whitsuntide."—*Punch.*

"Will be a boon to the weary Londoner, anxious to commune with nature."—*The Inquirer.*

"Capital guides to walks in the districts."—*Daily Chronicle.*

"A pleasant and convenient series of books for the guidance of the pedestrian."—*Literary World.*

"An idea with which we and our fellow-naturalists heartily sympathise. The series is one marked by that feeling for nature which it is so desirable to extend."—"H. W., in *Bayswater Chronicle.*

"The publishers have hit upon a good idea in their Half-Holiday Handbooks, which are likely to become popular favourites."—*Graphic.*

"The publishers have done well in issuing these little readable manuals for the guidance of the Londoner, who, pent up all the

week over his desk, or otherwise debarred from the sight of more natural objects than city sparrows, seeks in the short space granted him by the Saturday half-holiday movement, or on the feast-days of St. Lubbock, that closer acquaintance with the rural delights so necessary for his bodily and mental health. It is, of course, impossible in the short space of some seventy or eighty small pages to do more than indicate the chief attractions of localities so pleasant by nature as those above named; but these are very fairly set forth, and being illustrated by sections of a map on the scale of nearly one and a half miles to the inch, will be found of decided utility to the pedestrian in search of an object."—*The Field.*

"Fulfil their purpose thoroughly as a tourist's companions in his rambles about districts within a short distance from London."—*Bookseller.*

"They combine the useful information of the hackneyed local guide-book with something which is rarer and more difficult to present—the fostering of a love of nature and the kindling of some enthusiasm for the objects generally passed unheeded by the run of holiday excursionists, because they have had no chance of learning how to observe, nor have tasted the delights of it. . . . The information is very closely packed, and justice is done to the lovely scenery and scientific novelties of the neighbourhood. The books are certainly cheap and well got up."—*Nonconformist.*

"The best guides of the kind we have yet seen."—*Land and Water.*

"Will be found to add much interest to a Saturday afternoon walk into the country."—*Nature.*

"Should achieve a wide popularity."—*Court Circular.*

"All models of what a gossiping guide-book should be."—*South London Press.*

OUR NOBLE SELVES; or, Gleanings about Grantham Surnames. By the Author of "Notes on the Months," "Notes on Unnatural History," &c. ... ... o 1 o

---

SISTER EDITH'S PROBATION. By E. CONDER GRAY, Author of "Wise Words." Small 8vo., cloth extra ... ... o 1 o

"The three tales of which this volume is composed are not only well written, but cannot fail to strengthen those who read them, especially the young, in pure and holy living."—*Literary World.*

A HANDBOOK TO

THE FERNERY AND AQUARIUM, containing full directions how to make, stock, and maintain Ferneries and Freshwater Aquaria. By J. H. MARTIN and JAMES WESTON. With 43 Illustrations. Crown 8vo., cloth extra 0 1 0
Paper Covers... 0 0 9

*** Issued also in two parts, paper covers, 6d. each.

"We cordially recommend it as the best little *brochure* on ferns we have yet seen. Its merits far exceed those of much larger and more pretentious works."—*Science Gossip.*

"Though what Mr. Weston has to say is comprised within fifty pages, it forms one of the best manuals on the subject we have seen."—*English Mechanic.*

"Few of the people, perhaps, who are sincere lovers of flowers and gardens, imagine the 'fern paradise' it is possible for them to make with very little trouble. To such we would commend this admirable manual. In brief compass, and without wasting words, it tells all that is necessary to be known for the general cultivation of these lovely plants."—*Literary World.*

"Those who are anxious to know the methods by which the fresh-water, the insect, the microscopical and the marine aquaria, are managed with success will do well to consult Mr. Weston's pages."—*Field Naturalist.*

[*Ready.*

ADULTERATIONS OF FOOD (How to Detect the). By the Author of "Ferns and Ferneries." Numerous Illustrations. Crown 8vo., sewed 0 0 9

"The little work before us offers many useful hints to householders as to the detection of everyday adulteration."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

THE BATH AND BATHING. By Dr. J. FARRAR, F.R.C.P.E. Crown 8vo., limp cloth ... 0 0 9

"Dr. Farrar's manual is not only cheap, but it is so clear, concise, and practical that no one need fail to carry out his instructions, or in deriving wise counsel and direction from his pages."—*Literary World.*

EDUCATIONAL WORKS.

ARMY EXAMINATION SERIES.

I. GEOMETRICAL DRAWING: Containing General Hints to Candidates, Former Papers set at the Preliminary and Further Examinations, and Four Hundred Questions for Practice in Scales and General Problems. By C. H. OCTAVIUS CURTIS. Illustrated. Crown 8vo., cloth extra ... ... o 2 6

II. A MANUAL OF FRENCH GRAMMAR. By LE COMPTE DE LA HOUSSAYE, Officier de la Légion d'Honneur, French Examiner for Military and Civil Appointments. Crown 8vo., cloth extra... o 2 6

III. GEOGRAPHY QUESTIONS: Especially adapted for Candidates preparing for the Preliminary Examination. By R. H. ALLPRESS, M.A., Trin. Coll., Camb. Crown 8vo., cloth extra o 2 6

EASY LESSONS IN BOTANY.

By the Author of "Plant Life." With 120 Illustrations by the Author. Second Edition. Paper covers... o o 6
Linen covers... o o 7

Also in two parts 3d. each.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"Numerously illustrated, clearly written, with a good deal of matter packed with much dexterity into a small space."—*Science Gossip.*

"The arrangement is good; the illustrations are very numerous, there being three or four on almost every page; and the writer has done much to simplify the subject."—*School Guardian.*

"Still another primer of botany! Well, we cannot have too many, provided all are as good as this one."—*The Inquirer.*

POETICAL READER FOR THE USE OF SCHOOLS.

Arranged on an entirely new principle, with Illustrations specially done for the work. In Two Parts, each ... ... o 1
Or in sections separately.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"The editor of these two little volumes has managed to strike out an entirely new line for his pupils, and one which scarcely at any point crosses the beaten track. . . . To many readers besides school-children his volumes will present all the charms of novelty. The compiler has evidently a large acquaintance with the poetical literature of our country, and an excellent ear for the music of poetry. . . . The work is therefore one of exceptional interest."—*School Board Chronicle.*

EDUCATIONAL WORKS—*continued.*

AN ENGLISH GRAMMAR FOR SCHOOLS. Adapted to the Requirements of the Revised Code. In Three Parts. Price 2d. each, or complete in one cover ... ... o o 6

*** *Adopted by the London School Board.*

FIRST NATURAL HISTORY READER.

For Standard II. In accordance with the requirements of the Revised Code. Beautifully Illustrated. Crown 8vo., cloth ... ... o o 9



SPECIMEN OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"Written in a simple and pleasant style."—*School Guardian.*

"The woodcuts, which are to be found on every page, will make the lessons pleasant to the scholars, and the text is wisely put in a semi-conversational form, calculated to induce intelligent reading."—*Publisher's Circular.*

Published every Wednesday during Term.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

The Oxford Magazine:

A Weekly Newspaper and Review.

The aim of the promoters is to found a periodical which shall include among its contributors and readers both Graduate and Undergraduate members of the University, and which shall represent every side of Oxford life. Contributions of merit will be gladly accepted upon all subjects, and from writers of all opinions. Full and accurate information will be obtained from a regular correspondent in each College, and in the chief Clubs and Societies of the University.

The Management will be in the hands of an Editorial Committee, which will include Graduates and Undergraduates.

London Publisher: T. FISHER UNWIN, 17, Holborn Viaduct.

The SHIPWRECKED MARINER:

A Quarterly Maritime Magazine.

Edited by W. R. BUCK, Secretary of the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society.

ILLUSTRATED.

Published in January, April, July, and October.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

T. FISHER UNWIN, 17, Holborn Viaduct, E.C

THE TEMPLE.

SACRED POEMS AND PRIVATE EJACULATIONS.

By Mr. George Herbert.

Psal. 29.

In his Temple doth every man speak of his honour.

CAMBRIDGE:
Printed by *Thom. Buck*, and *Roger Daniel*, printers to the Universitie.
1633.

SPECIMEN. See page 6.

UNWIN BROTHERS, PRINTERS, LONDON AND CHILWORTH.

51



